



**Municipal Library,**  
**NAINI TAL.**



Class No. 923

Book No. W 16 V





H. R. H.





By kind permission of the Proprietors of "The Field."] *THE PRINCE OF WALES ON FOREST WITCH.*

From the painting by A. J. Munnings, A.R.A. Presented to His Royal Highness by *The Field*, in commemoration of the Hunting Season 1920-21.

Frontispiece.]

# H. R. H.

A CHARACTER STUDY OF THE PRINCE OF WALES

BY

MAJOR F. E. VERNEY, M.C.

THE DORSETSHIRE REGIMENT (RET.)

ILLUSTRATED

POPULAR EDITION

HODDER AND STOUGHTON  
LIMITED LONDON

*First published October 1926  
This Popular Edition August 1928*

Durga Sah Municipal Library,  
M. Ind. Tel.

दुर्गासाह नृगुणसिधल लाइब्रेरी  
नगीनाल

Class No, (विभाग) ..... 923

Book No, (पुस्तक) ..... W 16 V

Received On. .... Aug. .... 1947.

3503

*Made and Printed in Great Britain.  
Hassell, Watson & Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury*

# CONTENTS

## PART I

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. H.R.H. . . . .	3
II. HIS HANDICAP . . . . .	7
III. EARLIER INFLUENCES . . . . .	25
IV. "THE NAVAL MILL" . . . . .	35
V. CIVIL LIFE . . . . .	57
VI. THE ARMY . . . . .	81
VII. THE WAR . . . . .	99
VIII. THE FINAL PHASE . . . . .	III
IX. THE "HUMAN" ASPECT . . . . .	121
X. AN INTIMATE SUMMARY . . . . .	129
XI. A LONDON DAY . . . . .	151

## PART II

### *H.R.H. ON TOUR*

XII. EMPIRE BINDER . . . . .	167
XIII. H.R.H. AND THE DUTCH . . . . .	197
XIV. THROUGH THE DORPS . . . . .	217
XV. EFFECT ON NATIVES . . . . .	241
XVI. IN NATAL . . . . .	263
XVII. CONCLUSION . . . . .	279



## PART I



## CHAPTER I

H.R.H.

IF you come to think of it, the Prince of Wales attracts more universal interest than any living person. If I were not anxious to avoid the note of sloppy enthusiasm which is common to most that is written of him, I might almost claim that he is the object of wider attention than any individual of modern times.

It is a fact that he is a vivid figure in the imagination of millions who have never heard of Napoleon or Mr. Lloyd George. He is talked of in places where the Great War was never more than a vague rumour. On the N.-W. Frontier of India I have seen the eyes of a wild Afghan gleam with interest at the mention of his name. A group of naked Barotse hunters around a camp-fire in the basin of the Zambesi invited me to applaud a legend of his hunting prowess. I saw his photograph hanging in the mud hut of a Dinka chief in the Soudan. I could have bought picture post-cards of him in most of the bazaars of Egypt. I once heard some river Arabs discussing him fantastically on a Tigris *mahalla*.

Three years ago, at a dinner-party in a villa on the Bosphorus, I asked my Turkish host to interpret the subject of an eager wrangle that was in progress at



one end of the table. He smiled gravely and answered: "Your Prince of Wales."

In Vienna in 1920 an Austrian landowner with whom I was stopping remarked of the revolutionary disorders in his country: "If we had a Prince of Wales the Hofburg would be opened again and Austria would resume her real identity."

In the streets of Paris in 1924 I witnessed a display of interest in the Prince that was greater than one is accustomed to see in London. At the Olympic Games he was the object of as much attention as the events which were happening in the arena. At the Olympic Games Ball he was besieged on the dance floor by athletes of both sexes and all countries: the centre of an international barrage of enthusiastic curiosity which defeated my efforts at penetration.

In the United States I was astonished to find the name of the Prince of Wales occurring as frequently in ordinary conversation as it does in England, and surprised to observe regular allusions to him in the American newspapers. Whilst during his last visit to America, the Prince was the object of a publicity campaign on a scale which has never been seen in England.

In Great Britain, the Colonies, and Possessions I have yet to meet an English-speaking household which is sluggishly interested in the Prince of Wales or without knowledge of his public movements. Traveling at sea, I have noticed that most important items on the wireless summary escape comment in the apathy to current affairs which is generated by a long ocean

voyage, but if there happens to be any reference therein to the Prince of Wales it is sure to be quoted at the breakfast table.

In messes and clubs a story of the Prince will invariably suspend other topics of conversation. In fact, in one London Club to which I belong, the members of which on principle damn anything which is sentimental or popular, it was amusing to observe the elaborate camouflage with which certain highbrow Socialists endeavoured to disguise their interest in medical bulletins of the Prince's health which were contained on the Club tape after his accident in the Aldershot Point-to-Point.

With people of nearly every nationality and language in the past few years, I have found the Prince of Wales to be a better subject of conversation than the weather and a much more effective *liaison*.



## CHAPTER II

### HIS HANDICAP

**I**T happens with sufficient frequency to establish a rule, that when one makes the personal acquaintance of a popular idol, one is conscious of a feeling of disillusion or a sense of frustration. A meeting with the Prince of Wales has precisely the opposite effect. There is a quality of personality about him, an efficient, clear-cut reality, which gives one a sudden respect for popular sentiment and public intuition. He has the balance and poise of an administrator, the quick mind of a man of action, the insight of a woman, the knowledge of a statesman, the personal magnetism of a great leader. And at the same time there is an extraordinary ordinariness about him which dislocates all one's preconceived ideas, and causes one to regard him from an entirely new angle. As one gets to know him at work and at play one does not wonder at the universal interest in him, but one resents the fact that this interest is fed by so many banalities and embedded in so much picturesque platitude. One wants to 'tell the world' that its interest in H.R.H. is more than justified.

To understand any man, whether he be Prince or commoner, one must know in some detail the dominating influences of his earlier years, and his reactions

to those influences. This information is particularly essential to a comprehension of the Prince of Wales, for the indicated reason that personality is his sole weapon of achievement and his one instrument of maintenance in public esteem. The personality which has made the person of the Prince of Wales an object of increasing interest all over the world is one that has considerable force of character behind it. This force of character has been attained against odds, by hard work, self-discipline, effort, and a peculiarly complete experience of life and other men.

The odds against which the Prince had to strive were those which are commonly supposed to be his unique advantages, namely, his circumstances as ultimate Heir to the British Throne. From the moment when he was old enough to take a moderately intelligent interest in life, his development as an individual was handicapped by his destiny of Prince of Wales.

The traditional view of the Prince is that he commenced life with every human advantage plus a liberal donation of Divine Right: that the accident of his birth equipped him from the beginning with an unobstructed course and an adjustable winning-post. The popular conception of his adolescence is that he had nothing to do but grow up, smile, and leave the rest to his Royal setting.

The traditional view and the popular conception are wrong. Both are absolutely wrong. They are based upon the careless convention that a man who is born Royal is provided by Providence with a ready-made set of Royal qualities and the ability of ruling, as a

duck is born with webbed feet and the capacity of swimming. Further, they assume that under the British Constitution the functions of a Prince of Wales or a King of England are purely figurative and can be of no special importance in the government of Great Britain or the relations of the Empire. They disregard the physiological fact that the son of a King or the son of a King's Heir is born as ordinary as the son of any commoner ; that Nature endows him with precisely similar instincts, predilections, and weaknesses as she does the most average child of the middle classes : they presume the inheritance of a psychology from which are absent the normal impulses of free-will and free action. They ignore the fact that evolution is at work with Royalty as it is with every other class of the community, and that the qualities of a modern King must be as high as his rank if he is to survive.

The Prince has never had any illusions of Divine favouritism or Providential partiality. On the other hand, there have been occasions when he has suspected the opposite. In his earlier days his rank was more than a handicap to him : it was a heavy burden. In fact, to use his own words, " As a kid, it was the very devil." From the cradle his future was marked out for him by the relentless laws of his own destiny, and by the high sense of service to the State which governs his family. He was not born with a silver spoon in his mouth, but a curb-bit. To people of mature years who have been wearied by the struggle for existence and the fight for place, a curb-bit may appear no particular privation and a pre-destined course no

drawback, so long as both are physically comfortable and lead to position and affluence. But to the young and spirited, and all whose veins are fuller of blood than philosophy, a curb-bit and an iron-grooved destiny form an intolerable combination.

Life's principle inspiration is the spirit of adventure, and the chief field of adventure is the unknown. Nature provided the Prince with a large stock of the spirit of adventure, but his destiny denied him a field of the unknown. Spiritually and physically he was forbidden acquaintance with chance. The lure of the mysterious future; the subtle appeal of uncertainty; the thrill of wondering what life may have in waiting round its corners; the whole stimulus of the gamble of existence, was placed by circumstance within a ring fence marked with the warning inscription: 'No admittance for the Prince of Wales.'

This is not a mere academic deduction based upon psychological platitudes, but a statement of fact and an exposition of the Prince's personal reactions to his inherited position. As a child and a youth he keenly felt these inhibitions. To a modified extent he feels them now, and I think will continue to do so for some years. He is much too human and far too vital to become yet case-hardened to the deadening inevitability of living to a cast-iron plan. To H.R.H. chance is an essential factor of life. His physical vitality demands it. His composition screams for it. He *wants* to take chances. He actually needs this common heritage which is so remorselessly denied him by the accident of his birth.

It has often been alleged that the Prince is a reck-

less rider. I do not agree with this view, but I do agree that he takes chances and seeks rather than avoids a risk. I am not at all surprised by this. If there is any room for surprise to anyone who knows him, it is in his comparative moderation. With his whole existence earmarked, and his daily life lived to programme, it is only natural that he should 'take a chance' when he gets the opportunity. And his 'chance' opportunities are practically confined to the hunting-field and the polo-ground.

Yet even in sport, and at a time when age and experience had won him the right of a certain amount of personal liberty, destiny stepped in and laid a sticky hand upon his shoulder. In 1924 a leading member of the House of Commons stated to a full House: "This young man has one day to be King. The nation views with apprehension the manner in which he exposes himself to danger and trusts that his Royal father will exercise upon him an appropriate measure of restraint." These may not be the exact words that were used on that occasion, for I am quoting from memory, but they literally express the opinion conveyed by Parliament. This pronouncement was accepted by the King and by the Prince as evidence of national concern, and consequently the Prince's activities as a horseman were curtailed. In fact, he has not ridden in a single race in England since his fall in the Aldershot Point-to-Point which inspired this dramatic and unprecedented incident in the British House of Commons.\* The restriction is a very definite privation to the Prince. He loves the sport

\* Written December 1925.



of racing as much as he subconsciously craves the hazard of it. His sense of moral obligation to what might be a real public claim caused him to assent to this grandmotherly interposition, but his own private feelings in the matter were much the same as those which would be shown by any fit and keen rider of thirty years of age at being told that he must not race in case he should hurt himself.

So I say that the chief fascination of life in its human sense was and is denied the Prince by his own destiny. Stripped of all humbug and hypocrisy, the mainspring of all ambition and the source of all content in life is freedom of action. We do not set out to be great lawyers, eminent statesmen, distinguished doctors, fine workmen, or even great lovers, for sheer love of the good of the community, but for the satisfaction of our own egos. We do not seek indefinite service, but ultimate mastery. We all strive to reach a plane whence we can gratify freely those human urges and impulses which are dominant in our individualities. We insist upon a large measure of this freedom as a birthright. Many of us have this freedom in fact, whilst many of us have it only in our imaginations. The Prince is without freedom, in fact and in imagination. He cannot even deceive himself into thinking that he is a free subject of a free country. He can only stare wistfully at freedom through the railings of that ring fence to which I have alluded.

It is not my design to picture the Prince of Wales as a tragic figure of human disappointment, sitting gravely on the steps of the Throne reading warning notices and staring sadly at the 'might-have-been.'



*Photo by W. & D. Downey, Ltd., London.]*



He is nothing of the kind and never will be. He is much too sane and vital for morbid introspection. But I am trying to impress the extraordinary human disadvantages of being a Prince of Wales, and the psychological significance of this fact in relation to a perfect understanding of him from the point of view of the average person.

The first seven years in the life of anyone but a child prodigy are unimportant except to establish the circumstances of introduction to the world. In a study of the Prince however, this period must be mentioned in that it was the only part of his life where he had the privileges of a private citizen. He was not old enough to realise or appreciate this peaceful prelude. He knew nothing of anything else, and cared less. But he has frequently remarked on the fact during his experience of the prohibitions of a Prince. The curb-bit, and the handicap, and the ring fence, were in existence, but they were not applied. His people were too wise in their regard for his physical and mental balance to admit artificial inhibitions into his nursery. Nothing is recorded of this period except in the memories of people who were in contact with the Household at the time, but as young David was ultimate Heir to the Throne, his nursery activities were no inconsiderable source of interest at Buckingham Palace and St. James's: and therefore the recollections upon which I have been privileged to draw are adequate and accurate.

His horizon was the domestic domains of a well-kept household, plus occasional interested peeps at Ceremonial functions in the forecourt and gardens of

Buckingham Palace, drives in Richmond Park, and enthralling glimpses of London traffic. His world was inhabited by his nurses, his parents, his sister and brothers, a few impressive but genial policemen, a very jolly grandfather, and the ever-fascinating spectacle of big soldiers with bearskins and bayonets marching up and down outside grandfather's house, stiff and wooden like those little ones in his toy-boxes. He had a toy rifle and a realistic miniature sword in a plated scabbard, and it was rather amusing to put these on and copy the movements of the sentries and officers of the King's guard, though it was rather difficult to arrange a realistic Visiting Round with a sister, a footman, and a nurse. His younger brothers were too wobbly on their legs to be any good in the position of attention. Grandfather was all right, but like father, he was never available when really required. A daily ceremony at Buckingham Palace which never failed to enthrall David on the occasions when he was stopping there, was Guard Mounting, which was always attended by one of the bands of the Brigade of Guards. There were mornings when he mysteriously disappeared from nursery or school-room and was found with his face glued to an 'out-of-bounds' window that overlooked the forecourt in which Guard Mounting was taking place. A military band in a setting of uniformed troops has a powerful fascination for all children, and in fact for most adults. There is a heroic note in its music, a suggestion of glory and sacrifice, which stirs the qualities of pride and selflessness that are embryonic in every child. To young David the sound of military music and the sight

of troops on duty was a frequent and absorbing experience, in which his interest seldom slackened. To my mind this fact is not without significance, for those early years were very impressionable ones. Yet there was nothing of the young gaby in David. He was as impressionable as his years, but he had a remarkably level head and regarded the most emotional episodes with an intelligent and reflective eye. He was very young indeed when he enquired why the sentries remained outside whilst it was raining; and he was not contented with the answer 'Duty' until the word had been elaborately explained and illustrated to him.

However, apart from this external incidence of military influence which was unavoidable at Buckingham Palace and St. James's, his days and the atmosphere of his surroundings were much the same as those of any other child born of parents in comfortable circumstances. Life was extremely ordinary, though gilt by the splendid fantasies of youth. Court gossip informs me that one of David's pet possessions was a toy railway, and that after his first train journey to Scotland he decided to be an engine-driver when he grew up—a glamorous anticipation that he was encouraged to enjoy to the full until it was supplanted by the desire to become a Scottish piper. Another of his ambitions was inspired by his envy of the physical proportions and authority of the policeman on duty in Ambassadors' Court, and the dominating autocracy of the constables on point-duty in the traffic through which he was sometimes taken in a carriage. He informed his grandfather of his intention to be-

come a policeman on reaching the necessary size, and King Edward agreed that the idea was remarkably sound.

These first years of the Prince's life were devoted to making him a healthy child and to keeping him normal. His mother knew the responsibilities of high rank, and realised the privileges of comparative obscurity. One must lose advantages before one can fully appreciate them. The Princess of Wales was aware that the infancy of her first-born would be the only period of complete freedom that he would get in his life, and she intended that it should be as free as possible from the influence of his future position. His mouldings into a Prince would have to commence early, but until the day when he was considered old enough to commence learning, no person and no circumstance should be permitted to suggest to his young mind that he was in any way different from any other mother's son. In due course his country would claim him, but in the meantime he was his mother's child.

It was by no means easy to apply this wise plan. The bare incident of his birth was a factor in the calculations of statesmen and a headline in most of the newspapers. Before he was out of long-clothes he had become a topic of speculation and discussion in the Courts and Embassies of Europe. Half the women in the English-speaking world were taking an intimate interest in his welfare; and thousands of new-born citizens had been named after him. David was not only child to his mother, he was also eldest son of his father, and would one day be King of England. The

fact was not without effect on the minds of those who were intimately concerned with the daily care of the child, and not entirely devoid of subconscious and conscious influence upon the domestic regime. But that influence had its chief outward manifestation in a meticulous care for the child's well-being. To that extent only was it permitted to obtrude itself upon the conduct of young David; it was not allowed to interfere with his natural inclinations.

If he wanted to crawl on the floor, he crawled on the floor without fear of shocked and active protestations from a dignity-obsessed member of his nursing staff. And the only reason he did not in those days investigate the contents of the coal-box, like any other healthy and enterprising citizen of immature years, was because there never was in his nurseries a coal-box to excite his exploratory instincts. I remember regretting this hiatus in the equipment of the Royal Nursery at White Lodge on an occasion when an elderly, stiff and ceremonious spinster relative of my mother's came into the school-room at home, fresh from an introduction to that apartment, where she had been horrified to find the Royal infant sitting chewing a toy elephant, and wondering what she would have said if she had found him nibbling a piece of coal, which was the favourite secret diet of my young sister. This is a question I would like to ask the Prince—whether he had ever been so democratic as to eat coal. I should not be at all surprised if he grinned and answered: "As a matter of fact, I have tasted it." During these early years of his infancy the Prince's life was the usual jolly kind of business



that is common to most children : an inconsequent affair of food and games and make-believe, where nobody and nothing mattered and the only bore was having to go to bed early.

But at the age of seven years this neutral zone came to an end. The change was a gentle one and contained the attractions of new experience, but there was nothing casual about its plan or its application. It was rather pleasant to be promoted from the nursery to the school-room. It was fun to do small lessons and exciting to learn new words of a foreign language, but the adventure developed a certain irksomeness. The child discovered that quite a lot of things that he wanted to do and had been doing were forbidden.

He began to realise that there were a most awful lot of rules about everything, even about the most ordinary things, and so many ways of doing these ordinary things which were by no means instinctive. His first lesson in Royal tact, for instance, which was taught by a lady called Madame Bricka, who had had much experience of Royal school-rooms, was surprising. It was pointed out to him that when he grew tired in company he was not to show it or admit it, but to observe if the other person was showing signs of fatigue and then to say : " I am sure you are getting weary, would you like to rest a little ? " I am informed that he learned this lesson rapidly, and applied it sometimes with a mischievous readiness that robbed it of its diplomatic value.

Being a child of spirit and no little mugwump, he was not always obedient, and at times actively re-

sented these apparently absurd interferences with his liberty. On one occasion, when his youthfully logical mind had revolted against a series of 'Don'ts' that appeared to be unusually unreasonable, it was somewhat indiscreetly explained to him that these particular 'Don'ts' were due to the fact that he would be one day Prince of Wales; he stated emphatically that in that case he would 'much rather not be Prince of Wales.'

Later on, when he had reached the age of ten years and acquired some idea of the nature of his ultimate office, he remarked to his tutor apropos of some small matter of personal discipline: "It is no use being Prince of Wales some day unless I can do what I like." From my knowledge of him I should think it highly probable that he made a mental reservation to the effect that when he did become Prince of Wales he would permit no interference with his natural inclinations, and that he would do everything which he considered desirable. The imagination of a child, Prince or pauper, refuses to acknowledge obstacles and declines to surrender wishes to circumstances. It merely temporises with restrictions of which it does not approve. The Prince had lots of imagination and a fine will of his own.

In the ordinary way the thoughts and sayings of a child are of no interest or importance to anyone outside his domestic circle, but in the case of the Prince of Wales they have interest and importance to the extent of showing that he was as normal as any other child of healthy mind and circumstances; and that neither his nursery days nor his school-room hours had

placed a halo on his conception of himself ; and that his environment up to that time had been as impartial as Nature in the provision of a Royal point of view.

In the mirror of his dreams he saw a perfectly ordinary boy with unruly hair and tiresome tasks, and never an immaculate young gentleman in ermine robes, a crown, and a circle of bowing courtiers. In the matter of capacity he had not been endowed by Nature to withstand the burden of his future, or equipped with a body and mind to cope with its extraordinary mental and physical demands. As an individual he started definitely at ' scratch.'

His father and grandfather, and those whose counsel had effect upon the scheme of his education, knew intimately the onus as well as the honour of Princehood and Kingship. They realised that the Throne was no ornamental backwater upon which Royalty could slumber undisturbed by the currents of common conflict. Hereditary rule must ' make good ' in the main stream of evolution if it would justify itself and be of benefit to the State. The trend of political events indicated that sentiment was an insecure foundation for an anachronism. It had become obvious, too, that to rule was to serve, and not to dictate. In fact, if I may venture a personal observation, it seems that a modern King or Prince is *expected* to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds, and yet sit on the fence and be the benign godfather of the whole field.

It was obvious that the united interests of the Throne and the State would demand of the Prince qualities of a high order and an exceptional mettle :

qualities that could not be defaced by wear and tear nor impaired by private consideration or personal idiosyncrasies, a mettle proof against any assault. Superficialities, however brilliant, would never suffice. It was therefore necessary that these qualities should be implanted at an early age, so that they should become second nature. At the same time, it was essential that an ordinary human perspective should be maintained. Consequently the Prince's apprenticeship to his future job commenced when most children are still sprawling in their nurseries, and imposed upon him a dual task. On the one hand he had to be a normal, average child, free of all precocity, abnormality, and similar symptoms of the child prodigy, and on the other hand he had to absorb the rudiments of the abnormal and the prodigious.

It is obvious and natural that the application of this dual design imposed an appreciable strain upon his primitive reasoning powers and a tax upon his temperament. But he was too young to appreciate its significance or its peculiarity to himself, and so accepted most of its contradictions as part of the cussedness of growing up and the obtusity of adults. Yet, as time went on, in a childish way he began to realise that a lot of his discomforts were being caused by his future job as Prince of Wales, an explanation which appealed to him as being entirely inadequate as a justification for so many restrictions and also as an extremely indifferent prospect. Presumably it would be all right in the end, for he would become grown up like father and be able to do lots of attractive things, like riding horses and travelling and having

soldiers. At the same time, so far as he could judge by father and grandfather, there was nothing very remarkable about a Prince of Wales or a King. They were very ordinary persons, and they seemed to have very little time for play.

This initial training or schooling was conducted with skill and understanding : but all the subtlety in the world did not alter the fact that David's destiny was a handicap and a real restriction upon the freedom that is the natural right of every child. From the hour of his entry into the school-room at the age of seven years the question of the normal privileges of youth and of his rights as an individual, even of his happiness, was no question at all. Ordination by the accident of birth to a position in the State that is almost without parallel in potentiality for good or evil in the affairs and destiny of a great Empire, involved the elimination of self. It demanded self-sacrifice as a habit of the mind and as a duty of the body. To this handicap of a uniquely exacting destiny must be added the weight that is carried by any man whose profession is not of his own selection and whose original proclivities develop in an opposite direction. In the beginning the Prince, who was in all respects a perfectly ordinary child, had no choice in the matter of his future profession ; and after he was made Prince of Wales he had no honourable alternative to remaining in that office. Most of us have some voice in the choice of a profession, whether we be sons of statesmen, soldiers, dustmen, clerks, or peers. Many of us, in fact, have no need to adopt a calling until we are mature enough to discover an aptitude or a preference.

And all of us, even those whom circumstances force into a distasteful groove, have absolute liberty to change the wrong job for one that is to our individual desires and in which we can work with the added impetus of spontaneous enthusiasm.

Whilst the Prince was gambolling in the nursery, and before he had got as far as the school-room and a governess, the scheme of his future training had been worked out. It was prepared with the thoroughness which is applied in the formulation of 'General Orders' for a great campaign, or the composition of a syllabus of training for an army, and was the subject of as much careful thought and expert discussion in relation to its objective. The scheme was co-ordinated by the two greatest living experts in the science and art of modern kingship, King Edward and our present King. Nothing was left to chance, no requirement was overlooked, no future possibility was left to take care of itself. As far as was possible every detail was considered, debated, examined, checked and counter-checked from every angle that impinged upon future duties and responsibilities. The ultimate objective of this scheme was not the provision of an exceptional education for a Prince of Wales, or the manufacture of a King, but the moulding of a State servant whose actions and conduct would be watched by the inhabitants of half the habitable earth, and whose character and personality would prove either an asset of incalculable value to the British Empire or a grievous liability to the British Constitution. Upon his future influence might pivot social evolution, the welfare of a people, the fate of a hundred races, the integrity of

the Empire. Therefore the manner of his training and his teaching, and the cultivation and development of his character, were matters of supreme importance.

Twenty-three years ago, when the Prince's serious education was commencing, the foregoing statement of his potential importance may have sounded a courteous exaggeration, a floral tribute to tradition, a splash of conventional eye-wash. But to-day I question if a single subject of the British nation—or any other—who is in touch with current events and alive to the power of sentiment will say that the influence of the Prince of Wales is overstated. I doubt that even any anti-Royalists, Republicans, or red-flag Communists of any nationality, who have enough sense to come in out of the rain, could honestly say that this picture of the Prince's potentiality is overdrawn.

In any case, the point that is significant to a comprehension of the character and personality of the Prince of Wales is that those who were in authority over his plastic years held the view that the job which lay in front of him was a real job and not a feudal formality, and that whether he liked it or not he had got to fulfil it. And that adequate fulfilment demanded ruthless training. To be born Royal was an accident, but to be Royal was a relentless purpose.

## CHAPTER III

### EARLIER INFLUENCES

IT is difficult to say which individual influences affected the Prince most in those years of domestic seclusion, in the sense of making a definite impression on his character, because he was not only very young and resilient, but his training was well balanced and skilfully co-ordinated, though restricted in variety and contrast by his circumstances.

Being a perfectly ordinary little *sahib*, he had no kinks to be cancelled and no peculiarities to be pressed out. But being his father's son, he had got to be kept clear of promiscuous contacts which might impair the dignity of his circumstances, and at the same time he had to be steered wide of worship or deference which would give him swollen head. In this latter respect the danger was by no means small, in that snobbery is as common in court circles as it is outside them ; and even more vicious in effect.

The influence of his parents does not have to be described, because it has been written about *ad nauseam*, and there is no need to elaborate the simple fact that his parents were as wise and human in their relationship to their offspring as are any parents of intelligence who possess sanity and sympathy and a sense of parental responsibility.



The loving interest and personal attention of a mother, who was woman first and Princess second and regarded motherhood as a greater privilege than Royal rank, and considered social obligations to be inferior in importance to the care of her children, is undoubtedly the original foundation of the Prince's often quoted 'humanness' and his intrinsic simplicity. It formed in him the basis of his remarkable invulnerability to the callousing effects of constant adulation, and his absolute freedom from the automatic frigidities of a social mandarin. In the fine sanity of this maternal affection lay its permanent influence. There was nothing maudlin about it and nothing superficial. One may be content to add the reflection that no man who knows the influence of a wise mother can travel fast or far along the wrong road, whether that road leads to the armour-plated egotism of a brass-bound bureaucrat or to the ineffective puerilities of a pusillanimous princeling. Wise mother-love keeps a man human.

From his father more than anyone with whom he came in contact in those early years the Prince gathered his first impressions of the gravity of public duty and the serious side of life. Even at that time, before he came to the Throne, King George was a busy as well as very faithful servant of the State, who regarded his duties as serious responsibilities and his eldest son as both. Then as now he was conscientious to a superlative degree, and it was his effort to inculcate that measure of conscientiousness in David. Although he was an exceedingly busy man, he never relaxed an unremitting attention to the details of

David's training. Even after his accession to the Throne, when his desks were laden daily with despatch cases involving eight or ten hours' work on State affairs, he made time for frequent letters of advice to his eldest son at Osborne. King George's conscience was the State ; and his conscience has always been his guide and never his accomplice. It may be said, therefore, that the Prince always had the State at his elbow ; and it need not be said that this companionship, though absolutely essential, was sometimes distinctly irksome and heavy on his spirit.

The Prince's affection for his father in those days, and for quite a long time after, was liberally mixed with a wholesome respect and some fear, a reaction which is created by all efficient fathers. King Edward, on the other hand, having a grandfather's freedom from parental obligations and no disciplinary responsibility, inspired a different type of affection, but exerted an influence of no little effect on the Prince's character. Quite apart from a different degree of relationship to David, and the corresponding increase in latitude of treatment, there was also a similar variation in temperament and point of view.

To King Edward life was a brilliant adventure, and duty somewhat of spectre invoked by the repressive ideas of Queen Victoria during his long minority. Whereas to David's father life was, and is, a duty, and adventure the spectre.

In King Edward's attitude towards his young grandson there was the gaiety and exuberance of the grandsire with a youthful heart. He captured David's imagination and affection, not because he was King,

but because he was never King—a very jolly equal and an experienced contemporary.

King Edward would rag like a large boy or would chat as if David were a grown man. He never talked down, and he never talked up. His conversation was designed to interest and amuse an attractive young descendant, rather than to instruct an heir. This contemporaneity of King Edward's may have been imposed to some extent by a sense of proportion which could not fail to perceive that David was amply provided with precept, or it may have been inspired by a natural fellow feeling; but its effect on David was considerable. King Edward was the only person in his circle who did not try to teach him something, and for that reason he taught him a lot. Extreme youth has no natural appetite for artificial inhibitions and learning, and is therefore inclined to regard its avowed mentors with a certain amount of reserve and trepidation. To David, King Edward was about the only adult person he knew who had not to be treated with circumspection. To his father and mother he had to be a dutiful child, to his governess and tutor an obedient pupil, to all servants very polite and gracious; but to his grandfather he could be himself. In fact, the Prince found in King Edward a point of balance for his struggling personality.

It has often been suggested that the Prince owes much of his democratic spirit to the influence of King Edward, but I do not think that the deduction is sound, for two reasons: one, that King Edward was much more of an aristocrat than a democrat, a gracious and tolerant one if you like, but by no means a believer in

the doctrine of 'Jack is as good as his neighbour.' The second reason is that the circumstance of their association afforded no opportunity of democratic demonstrations such as would impress themselves upon the character of a young boy.

But he did acquire from King Edward a certain childish sang-froid, poise, and confidence, and a wider conception of life. King Edward is no vague figure in the Prince's recollection of those early days. He had such a fine sympathy with and comprehension of his grandson's youthful mind in relation to the burden for which it was being prepared. However, King Edward's influence was only a phase of the Prince's youth, and an intermittent one at that, whereas the influence of King George was a condition, definite and continuously active, controlling and responsible. In the nursery the Prince's father had been merely a father, unobtrusive and of no particular consequence. In the school-room he gradually assumed the proportions of an invisible but omnipresent Providence. As the Prince's perceptions were deepened by the progress of his education and a fuller grasp of his tasks, he began to regard his father as the personification of that duty which seemed to be at the back of everything, and to associate him inseparably with the motive of existence.

This subconscious conclusion was a natural one, for King George was not only a parent to his son, he was a profession—the profession of which the Prince was being taught the elementary principles. It was no part of the theme of the Prince's early training that his future responsibilities should be more than an abstract

influence upon his youthful years, or that his conception of his father should be coloured by his father's calling. But as King George was an impressive example of what the Prince had to be—in the eyes of those with whom he was in contact—it is not remarkable that King George bulked abnormally in his son's imagination, and that abstract ideas became concrete realities. However, these realities were no more and no less irksome to the Prince at the time when he began to realise them than the realities which are faced by any child whose primary education is serious in character and skilful in application; for duty and obligation was in the atmosphere of his environment. He had no knowledge of ease and primitive freedom other than that which he had gained in the nursery, and no standard of comparison. On the other hand, he was quite an ordinary child of normal instincts and average capacity, and by the time he reached the age of ten years—two of them with a tutor and a French instructor—he realised that life was an extremely busy business, full of discipline and inclined to be onerous and exacting.

I have said that it is difficult to decide which was the most definite influence of the Prince's domestic years, in so far as the formation of his character is concerned, but there is no doubt that his tutor, Mr. Hansell, was the most active agent in the moulding process and a very substantial factor in the Prince's earlier life. As King George was dominant, Mr. Hansell was pervasive.

Mr. Hansell was a typical public-school man and a typical public-school master. There were many

subjects he had to teach the Prince which are outside the normal curriculum of a public school, but it was his particular task to implant certain principles which are outside the routine of a Royal Palace. It is commonly claimed that a public school equips a man with qualities which cannot be acquired from books or any specialised system of instruction. It was not considered politic or desirable to plunge the young Prince into the rough and tumble promiscuities of a preparatory school at the immature age of eight years, but it was decided that the spirit of a public school should as far as possible govern the Royal school-room. Mr. Hansell was saturated with this spirit, and he was placed in charge of the Prince's education practically from its commencement. He knew how to train boys. He had handled hundreds of them. Over the Prince and his brothers he was given precisely the same authority as if they had been the sons of commoners in his 'house' at Rossall, with similar powers of discipline and an equal freedom from interference in the direction of their studies, their games, and their control. He ordered their hours of work, organised their leisure, supervised their personal conduct, allotted their holidays and arranged their amusements. He was headmaster, housemaster, games' master, and holiday tutor.

It was his business to build the ground-work of a general education with special regard to the demands of the future, but at the same time it was his especial function to foster the common touch. From Mr. Hansell the Prince had to learn the public-school point of view: the readiness to take the rough with the

smooth ; to work well and play well ; to smile cheerfully when things went wrong, and not to get swollen headed when things went right ; to stand on his own feet like a little man, and to do his jobs, pleasant or unpleasant, without making a song of the doing. It was not Mr. Hansell's duty to instruct the Prince in the wearing of a coronet or crown, but to impart the principles of ' the game,' as understood by the average public-school boy.

This aspect of the Prince's home education does not appear on the surface to be of more than simple significance in the formation of his character or to be specially burdensome, but it was both, for his background was contradictory. It is easy enough for a boy to assimilate democracy in a preparatory school or in the lower forms of a public school, but it is by no means easy to do so in a Royal Household where his senses are assailed by differences in rank and privileges, by pomp and ceremony. In the same degree, it is difficult to convince a child that he can claim no indulgences, when at the same time his history books teach him that his family rules an Empire and display the powers of Princes and Kings.

The Prince's mind, like that of any other boy of his age, was too primitive for sophisticated reasoning. He judged by his eyes and ears more than by his copy-books. In none of the things he was being taught had he the stimulus of direct example such as is provided by the coercive inspiration of a crowd of other boys. As an isolated individual in a secluded Royal apartment, he had to believe that he was a unit of a community spread over an Empire. The companionship

of younger brothers and sister was no aid to this conception, for the Prince, like most eldest children of a family, was more of an autocrat than an equal with his juniors. This confiction of experience with theory was especially marked in games, where a boy normally learns more of the principles of life than precepts can teach him. From time to time cricket matches and games of football were arranged with the children of tenants and servants on the Royal estates, but parental strictures on both sides caused self-consciousness. Estate or village children were no doubt told to be careful to remember that they were playing with their future King, and the Prince was told to deport himself like a gentleman. And thus these games were deprived of their principal virtue in relation to the code which the Prince was being taught in the school-room.

Another feature of the Prince's education, which added weight by comparison with the labour of the average boy, is that through all its stages he was not working to pass examinations but to acquire permanent knowledge. It is one thing for a boy to 'mug up' sufficient data to scramble through a 'remove,' but it is quite another to satisfy a responsible tutor and an exacting father that you know your subjects to the bone. Take, for instance, French and German. The Prince had to learn these for use, not to obtain a forty per cent. 'pass' on a formal examination paper. He was not merely passing through the automatic processes of a scholastic machine; he was seriously engaged upon his apprenticeship to the most exacting profession of modern times.



This home phase of the Prince's education, combined with the influences which I have described, had a complex effect upon his youthful mind. At the end of it he was still a child and yet something of a man, but a diffident man. This diffidence dominated his original self-assurance and qualified some of his natural spontaneity. He felt that life ought to be something of an adventure, but he was not quite sure about it. He had discovered that things are not what they seem, and that he was involved in an extremely difficult situation. He was encompassed by don'ts, and there were an awful lot of people to consider and please. He realised that his father, Mr. Hansell, and duty expected a tremendous lot of him, and he felt that he had got to do what he could about it, though it was an irksome business. Life was very much 'one damned thing after another.' But though his own will and individuality was curbed, it was by no means obliterated. He could be obstinate on occasion, as well as obedient generally. He was a little afraid of his current responsibilities, but he was not intimidated by them. The prospect of leaving home and going to Osborne affected him with much the same mixed feelings as those of any small boy who has been brought up in seclusion and is faced by the unknown world of a big school and crowds of other boys. But his temperament was active and adventurous, and the idea attracted him more than it repelled. He hoped that it would bring him some relief from incessant surveillance, and give him some of the freedom for which he was already hankering.

## CHAPTER IV

### "THE NAVAL MILL"

OSBORNE COLLEGE opened the third phase in the moulding of the Prince, and introduced a change in his environment and outlook that was drastic in its effect upon the development of his character. No contrast could be greater than that between a carefully tended existence in the aloof seclusion of a Royal school-room and casual life in the careless communism of a naval college.

Osborne provided the Prince with the prologue of his present perspective. It initiated him into the world of hard fact, and gave him his first contact with himself as a competitive unit. It plunged him into an equal comradeship with a large number of healthy young pagans who were no respecters of persons or of rank unless that rank was naval. To a boy at Osborne a midshipman is a god, but a duke is only a superior kind of a dustman. There is no community in the world, or Russia, where social importance is of less account than it is amongst the cadets of the Royal Naval Colleges. A civilian title of any kind to them is merely an incentive to violence if the owner shows the slightest sign of remembering it.

Life at Osborne resembles in some respects life at a public school, but in others there is a marked difference.

The ordinary subjects of a public school are taught there and the usual games are played, but the syllabus and system are specifically designed for producing naval officers. The main difference lies in the fact that a naval cadet is a self-reliant and hardy young citizen at an age when his public-school contemporary is still a boy. Osborne is also different from a public school in that it does not admit a boy because he is the son of his father or because his name has been on the entrance list from birth, but because he is of the type which the Osborne 'Interview Committee' considers suitable material for the making of a naval officer. That committee only passes boys in whom can be seen the promise of creditable additions to the Senior Service. It is no home for family pets or young gentlemen with high foreheads, dreamy eyes, and artistic ambitions, but a place for young players of 'the game,' alert, active, quick, intelligent, and resolute, with the instincts of comradeship, tradition, and esprit de corps. It will be understood, therefore, that the atmosphere into which the Prince was plunged was entirely unsympathetic to any of those considerations which had governed his existence at home, and that survival at Osborne demanded individual qualities which he had had little opportunity of discovering in himself.

The Prince entered Osborne on precisely the same footing as an ordinary cadet, excepting that he was accompanied by his tutor, whom he already regarded as much more of a penance than a privilege, and who was in fact an additional preceptor as well as a guide. In the matter of duties, discipline, studies, games, and

treatment, the Prince was on the same level as every other cadet in the college. It was the King's command that this level should be maintained throughout and that the staff should accord no privileges to the Prince which were not available to cadets generally. To the cadets themselves no such orders were issued, because they would have been superfluous and possibly regarded as a direct invitation to give 'this Prince cove' an exceptionally thin time.

On account of the extreme youth of the cadets, there were many small bodies covering large hearts, but the Prince's was nearly the smallest of the lot. He was thirteen years of age, as were most of the cadets in his batch, but he was very slight, fair haired, and blue eyed, and looked about three years younger than any of them. In fact, his size in conjunction with the fact that he was to become Prince of Wales, suggested to the humour of his contemporaries the nickname of 'The Sardine.'

I do not know what his private impressions were during his first few weeks at Osborne, but I understand that they were extremely mixed, more than a little bewildering, and that he felt even smaller than he looked. Normal youngsters of thirteen years do not analyse their sensations or confide their feelings to other people: neither did the Prince. In the code and language of the average young *sahib*, it is 'not done.' But quite apart from any question of code, at Osborne he became less communicative than usual, somewhat introspective and definitely self-restrained. In his own personal recollections, he felt 'rather like a lost dog.'

However, his secret thoughts and feelings at that time are unnecessary to an understanding of his position or to a comprehension of his difficulties. The significant fact is that to him entering Osborne was a sudden plunge into the deep-end of a life with which he was completely unfamiliar. It was not only his first school, but it was his first experience of promiscuous fellowship with boys of his own age. Practically all his brother cadets had been 'broken in' by a few years at a preparatory school. The Prince was without that advantage. He had come to Osborne direct from a home life which was more secluded and fenced with restrictions than that which an ordinary child leaves to enter the half-way house of a prep. school. The nature of his tuition at home had taught him what to expect, but oral preparation, however expert and thorough, is a poor substitute for practical experience. That preliminary period of private tuition had been essential to teaching him those elements of a Royal point of view which could not have been taught at school, but it handicapped him in his initiation at Osborne. In many ways he was far ahead of his contemporaries, but in others he was far behind. His struggle, therefore, was an uneven one. Another weight he carried was his position as his father's son and future Prince of Wales. As I have indicated, at Osborne any sort of a title is a burden and singles a boy out for more knocks than ha'pence. Decorative nomenclature has to be lived down, not lived up to. There is no snobbery amongst boys of that age and type. Family distinction provides ground for anticipation of swank, and swank of

any kind receives ruthless treatment. If a boy has a ‘ tag ’ to his name, he is never given the benefit of any doubt by the other boys ; he is regarded with a certain amount of suspicion until he has proved himself aware that he is no better than plain Smith, and is ready to acknowledge himself as Smith’s inferior.

The manner in which the Prince passed his test was summed up by a friend of mine who was at Osborne with the Prince : “ There was a certain amount of ‘ jaw ’ about his arrival, and he got the weather-eye for a bit, but there was no nonsense about ‘ The Sardine,’ he was just like everybody else.”

As a matter of fact, although he fitted in properly to his new surroundings, and to all outward appearances was the same as any other cadet, he was not comfortable about it, for in one very human respect he was at a decided disadvantage. He had always to be so beastly courteous. He was forbidden the schoolboy luxury of telling another fellow that he did not like his face, or of ‘ plugging him one ’ on the nose if he got too ‘ cocky.’ In a game, if another fellow called him a ‘ chump ’ or a ‘ silly ass,’ he was supposed not to retaliate. In practice, however, he did not always exercise this Royal restraint, and was at times ready and quick enough with the appropriate retort.

The Prince entered Osborne with quite an ordinary supply of self-assurance, but his equipment also included a large number of special ‘ Don’ts ’ for Osborne of which the foregoing is only one. It has been said by various formal biographers and others less well informed that he is nervous, and that this nervousness was acquired at Osborne and Dartmouth

in consequence of the pressure of a discipline that is designed to keep all the cadets in the same mould and on the same level of equality. The question of his much emphasised 'nervousness' I will deal with in another place, but the statement that he was made nervous by the system of the two naval colleges is rubbish. It was the constant practice of the inhibitions laid upon him by his future office which made him diffident and shy and jumpy. It was the 'Don'ts' that did it. He did not mind the discipline and his heart was in the 'level,' but the claims of his destiny as Prince of Wales, which could at no time be ignored by his tutor or by the Authorities at Osborne and Dartmouth, clashed with his complete absorption into that level. He never had a dog's chance of clicking comfortably at home into the machine: of being a young devil amongst a lot of other young devils. They called him 'The Sardine,' and that was about all he could be. He had got to be on an equal footing so far as work and discipline was concerned, but he had got to be on a sort of pedestal in the matter of his natural predilections. The desire to keep him from having any privileges as a Prince had the effect of robbing him of his advantages as a boy. Unlike the other cadets, he could not 'balance up' irksome hours of duty by flinging himself wholeheartedly into the irresponsibility of 'play' hours. There was always something he had to remember *not* to do, which the others could do freely. His burden was a double one, and it had to be a double one, for the self-denying essentials in the make-up of a Prince of Wales must grow up with the boy. They cannot be laid on after-

wards like a veneer. It is not surprising, therefore, that his original self-assurance became shaken and replaced by a pronounced self-effacement. However, there was nothing namby-pamby in his diffidence. Beneath it was a deuce of a lot of hard grit, obstinate courage, and a stout heart. He was polite and restrained and even nervous, but he kept his end up all the time and was no little plaster saint with all that.

It is commonly said that a sailor can turn his hand to any job, and see it through better than most men, but it is not so commonly realised that there is truth in the saying. In 1924, when the Prince was being shown over the Ford Motor Works in the United States, its proprietor expressed surprise that his Royal guest had such an intimate acquaintance with the details and principles of engineering. It is not a surprising fact at all, because engineering was one of his daily subjects at Osborne. The Prince went through the engineering shops and the carpentering shops as he went through all other subjects that are included in the education of a practical sailor. He was as familiar with lathe and bench as any young engineering apprentice in a civil works, and just as thorough at his job. He knows what it is to have grease on his face and steel filings in his hair ; to handle drills, chocks, templates, calipers, castings, forgings ; and to assemble machinery and fittings. And he knows the theory and principles of engineering. Engineering, electricity, ballistics, carpentry, catering, mechanics, mass hygiene, organisation, and law are subjects that are as essential to the education of a naval officer as are seamanship, gunnery, and the usual curriculum of



an ordinary public school. A practical acquaintance with these trades is as essential on the quarter-deck as is a working knowledge of national affairs and statesmanship to the Throne. Partly in reaction from the perpetually oppressive precepts of the latter, and partly in response to the natural appeal of the former, the Prince was infinitely more interested in craftsmanship than kingship. Like all boys of his age, he adored doing practical things, but was bored stiff by abstract tasks.

Dartmouth, the naval 'finishing' academy, applied, elaborated, and riveted home the lessons and the experiences of Osborne. The combined results of these two colleges achieve a training which is probably more thorough, more varied, and more in touch with the practical requirements of everyday life than is attained by any other educational institution in the civilised world. And the dominant note and object is to turn out MEN—steady-eyed, clear-skinned, self-reliant, quietly efficient young leaders to handle ships and men in peace and war, and to sow over the seven seas and the shores of the British Empire the highest traditions of discipline, service, and citizenship.

The Prince of Wales spent approximately five years at Osborne and Dartmouth, completing the full course of shore training for the Royal Navy. He passed in on his merits, and he passed out on his merits, and he passed in spite of the fact that he was Prince of Wales, not because of it. In judging this result, one has not only to consider the disadvantages which I have outlined, but also the fact that concurrently

with his training as a cadet, his special studies for his future duties as Prince of Wales were being sweated over under the guidance of Mr. Hansell and the direction—by almost daily letter—of his father.

There is no doubt that these years of rigorous training as a cadet at Osborne and Dartmouth had a definite effect on his character and upon his point of view. He had been looking himself in the face as an ordinary human unit from the angle of his father's subjects; he had been absorbing average ideas and the common view; he had been realising his own limits and shouldering his own responsibilities. He had been plumbing the gulf between his own natural inclinations and the obligations of a Prince. He had been discovering standards of comparison and making acquaintance with the laws of survival.

In analysing the personality of the Prince of Wales, one must give full weight to the effect of that five years' serious study of a responsible profession—a five years' grapple with the dual task of being a perfectly ordinary naval cadet and fulfilling the requirements of a Prince—for it established the rudiments of his present philosophy. At the end of it he was still ridiculously youthful, but he was at the same time remarkably mature—a boy in years, a child in appearance, but something of a man in character.

When he returned home from Dartmouth, his manner had a new reserve and his face in repose bore an expression of mature gravity. Not the gravity of a lost gaiety or of disillusion; not a gravity to justify a pathetic press headline, but just that note of grave-

ness which indicated that he had borne a burden, and knew that life was no joke and that his part in it was by no means decorative. However, when Osborne or Dartmouth is mentioned he will usually remark: "I had a rather decent time there," or "a jolly good time." And so he had, in spite of his handicap and despite the restrictions that were imposed upon him, and the continuous individual supervision of which he was the object, for he had lots of resilience and was no little complaisant martyr or princely paragon.

In between leaving Dartmouth and proceeding to sea to complete his naval training, he was introduced to the realities of his heritage as his father's son.

He had just spent his most impressionable years in assimilating as second nature the codes of a community that detests variations from a common level of equality. He had absorbed very completely the unwritten laws of a profession which prides itself on silence and shuns the limelight, when he was thrust by his circumstances above all levels and placed bang in the middle of all the limelight that could be produced by the world's press and the vivid interest of an Empire's people.

From the cheery camaraderie of self-effacement of engineering shops and navigation classes, and the nickname of *Sardine*; from the healthy everydayness of Smith, Brown, or Robinson, he was jerked suddenly to the aloof dignities of Prince of Wales and to the middle of the world's stage. It is not surprising that he looked 'pale and nervous' as he stood in the centre of that great feudal pageant of his Investiture at Carnarvon, surrounded by the pomp and cere-

monies of the ages. But neither is it surprising—considering the lessons he had been learning—that despite his discomfort his voice was steady and clear as he made his public vow of allegiance, and that his address in the Welsh language was unfaltering. He had been acclaimed Prince of Wales, he had taken up the reins of his official destiny, but he was as he had grown at Osborne and Dartmouth. He was on a job, and he was seeing it through, whether he liked it or not. He could not avoid getting a little ‘ rattled ’ at being the centre-piece of such a panoplied pageant ; in fact, he had been rattled for weeks in anticipation of the event ; but he could keep his head and stiffen his lips like a man through even that ordeal. One knows that experienced actors get attacks of nerves on a first night and that practical orators quake and fumble over a maiden speech in the House of Commons. Yet to both of these publicity and an audience is a commonplace as well as the breath of existence. So it needs no unduly vivid imagination to conceive the inquisitorial strain to the Prince of this impressive ceremony of his Investiture in the presence of a hushed gathering of great men, his father and his father’s principal subjects intent upon every movement he made and every word he uttered.

From the common angle the Investiture of the Prince of Wales was merely an automatic stage in genealogical incidence—his official coming of age, but to the Prince himself the event was by way of being a psychological crisis. It tightened up his ego and crystallised his personality in much the same way that battle brazes the man in the young soldier. It re-

focussed his perceptions and defined his individuality. When he left Dartmouth a few weeks before his Investiture, he was diffident to a degree. When he joined his ship a few weeks after the Investiture, he was dauntless and self-reliant. In fact, to officers and men on the *Hindustan*, who were prepared to receive a shy and rather pathetic young Prince, he was a 'surprise packet.'

To the Prince the *Hindustan* was not only an entirely new experience, or the crowning culmination of five years' naval training, it was a supreme adventure free from all the personal restrictions by which he had been surrounded for ten years. His emotions were entirely spontaneous, but his sense of appreciation was perfectly articulate. He was having a holiday from his handicap. He could not help being Prince of Wales and he could not avoid it. Being Prince of Wales was the deuce of a business. But for three months he was going to be himself, and absolutely one of the others: a small and perfectly ordinary cog in the machinery of a great grey battleship cleaving the open seas. This time there would be no tutor; no one at his elbow with a bundle of Royal 'don'ts'; and no daily letters from and to his people.

Though a cadet regards a midshipman as a very glorious being, and puts on the uniform for the first time as though he were assuming the garments of a god, it is a hundred to one that not another newly fledged 'snotty' on the *Hindustan* felt such a 'swell' as the Prince did or had the same feelings of elation. His contemporaries' delight in their new status was

tempered by a subconscious realisation that duty on a battleship was their first serious trial at their profession, and they were subtly haunted by somewhat fearsome anticipations of the intimate proximity of much greater gods than midshipmen. The Prince was not by any means without these fears, but they were dwarfed by the greater appreciation of escaping similar shore influences.

Two friends of mine were on this cruise of the *Hindustan*, one then a lieutenant, and the other a ‘ snotty ’ who had been at Dartmouth with the Prince. To the lieutenant the Prince was “ all there, I can tell you ”; to the ‘ snotty ’ the Prince was the ‘ surprise packet ’ as already quoted. An incident the former officer relates of his first meeting with the Prince is amusing and illuminative.

This officer, who seems to have had the conventionally abrupt way of his rank and calling in checking breaches of naval etiquette on the part of his juniors, had been kept busy on various watches, and spells of sleep, for twenty-four hours after sailing, and had not met the Royal ‘ snotty.’

Entering the ward-room, sacred to the ranks of Sub-Lieutenant and upwards, he was horrified to find therein a very small ‘ snotty ’ comfortably seated in an easy chair smoking a cigarette.

“ What’s your name ? ” demanded the Lieutenant, “ and what the deuce are you doing in the ward-room ? ”

The little ‘ snotty ’ slid to his feet to give his name and answer the crime of being in such an august apartment.

"Wales, sir," said he. "The Captain brought me in here. I hope you don't mind frightfully."

"W-H-A-A-T? You cheeky young devil: get out of this before I kick——" He paused and had a good look at the offender. "Dammit! I believe you ARE Wales."

The Prince grinned apologetically. "Sorry, sir, I believe I am too—but I can't help it."

To his seniors the Prince exhibited the wholesome respect of his years and rank. With his equals in rank he was on an unqualified level—a typical 'snotty.' In the gun-room he was as cocky as his naval 'seniority' and the gun-room code permitted. There he was initiated into the ruthless customs of social conduct for naval small fry. 'Fork in the beam' and 'Dogs of war' are two brilliant examples in which he participated with as much vim as the circumstances demanded. 'Fork in the beam' is a tactical exercise in deportment for junior 'snotties.' When the senior members of the midshipmen's mess desire to be relieved for any or no reason of the society of their juniors, an ordinary table-fork is violently plunged into a wooden locker or partition and the operator shouts 'Fork in the beam.' By the time the fork has ceased its vibrations every junior 'snotty' must be out of the room. As the gun-room door on the *Hindustan* is by no means a wide aperture and Admiralty forks do not quiver indefinitely, there was usually a jam of juvenile officers in the doorway, which was cleared with astonishing speed by the seniors applying vigorous chastisement to the rear anatomy of the burrowing laggards. Being of an alert disposi-



*Photo by G. Lambourne.]*





tion, the Prince was usually out of the room at the first twang of the minatory fork.

‘ Dogs of war ’ is a more prolonged exercise from which there is no sanctuary. When any individual of muscular merit arouses the ire of the ‘ Sub ’ in charge of the gun-room, that officer, if he thinks fit, will issue the command, ‘ Dogs of war !—out Smith ’—or whatever is the name of the subject of the Sub’s displeasure. It becomes the urgent duty of every ‘ snotty ’ to at once leap at Smith and ‘ out ’ him from the room, and it is incumbent on Smith to defeat this design if possible. In the end Smith is usually ‘ outed ’ ; but, according to the toughness of Smith’s physique, his ejection is painful to the ‘ Dogs of war.’

Beyond the confines of the gun-room the unwritten laws for the conduct of ‘ snotties ’ are equally in evidence, though of a less boisterous character. In the gun-room, within the limits laid down by the informal autocracy of the Sub-Lieutenant and senior midshipman, the ‘ snotty ’ can be as inconsequent as he likes, but elsewhere he must be as innocuous as he looks. Even with a very junior ‘ one-striper ’ they have to mind their p’s and q’s, speak only when they are spoken to and then be jolly careful what they say. In the Prince of Wales’s case naval discipline was reinforced by a horror of ‘ side ’ ; a fear of being thought to presume on his position as Prince of Wales. He was always in rather a stew about that. However, all ranks and ratings on the *Hindustan* realised that this slip of a young ‘ snotty ’ with the fair hair, round blue eyes, and a King for father was not so timorous as he seemed nor as angelic as he looked. From turn out

at 5 a.m. until 'pipe down' at 9.30 p.m. he was 'all there'—smart to obey an order, quick to issue a command, and alert to see that commands were correctly obeyed. There was no cotton wool about him, no frills, and no nonsense. Whether he was on duty handling a party of hard-bitten A.B.'s; in a gun-turret receiving instruction; doing a watch; or parading for Divisions, he was right up to the mark, earning his 1s. 9d. per day and unqualified respect.

He had a surprisingly vigorous vocabulary when required and a fine appreciation of a similar accomplishment in others. He often brought a grin of surprised admiration to the faces of those who had been judging him by his cherubic countenance and his shyly perfect manners. To his Dartmouth friends he was revealing unexpected hardness and self-confidence. He was in the thick of every 'snotty' rag and was not above initiating a surreptitious joke amongst the other 'snotties' during duty when anything or anyone struck him as comic or if he got bored. He was developing his sense of humour towards the pompous and sententious. Both are extremely rare amongst sailors, though they are not entirely unknown in the senior ranks. The Prince of tradition would never dream of poking fun at people's shortcomings. The Prince of Wales was no fairy story, but a very material young devil. He had put his halo into store along with his coronet and robes. A battleship is no seminary for 'young ladies' or waxwork models, and the Prince of Wales was a long way from being either. Yet even on this grey ship of war in the bare North Sea he could not entirely escape his handicap.

Wholeheartedly he merged himself into his background and his rank as a typical midshipman of the Royal Navy. But his future responsibilities accompanied him even to the North Sea. The Navy was not his permanent profession, but only a part of his education. Yet it was written that he should learn it, and therefore his naval training in this three months was conducted on the intensive system. Besides doing the ordinary duties of a midshipman, he had to study and practise the duties of his seniors: gunnery, seamanship, navigation, and administration. He was absorbedly interested in these advanced stages, but it is unnecessary to add that he was not by any means enthusiastic over this additional cramming which involved long spells away from the normal routine and society of his brother ‘snotties.’ But he did not shirk the burden. As he remarked to my friend ‘Sandy’ of the ward-room incident, he “could not help” being Prince of Wales; but he was Prince of Wales: and that was that.

However, there was not a rank or rating on board the *Hindustan* who would have had him help being Prince of Wales. Think of him as he was then, slender, small, frail-looking, blue-eyed, pink-cheeked and fair, cherubically youthful, even childish. Then picture him in that great steel ship of war, the last word in mechanical destruction, stiffening his young lips and bracing his small form, snapping out words of command in a shrill young voice to big, hard-jawed, leather-skinned veterans of the Navy as though he had been doing the job for twenty years.

The end of the cruise came too soon for the Prince.

He resented and regretted leaving the *Hindustan*. He hated the idea of leaving the Navy. And his shipmates, from the Captain downwards, shared his feelings.

In case this picture of the Prince on the *Hindustan* has conveyed the impression that he was unique as a ' snotty ' and a perfect little hero, let me water down the picture by adding that he was nothing of the kind. There were other kids of his own age on board with fair hair, Botticelli expressions and a fine word of command, doing their jobs with the demeanour of Navy veterans and the esteem of comrades. If the Prince of Wales had been Midshipman Jones he would not have been the object of special observation on the *Hindustan*, and so might have passed from that vessel at the end of the cruise with no particular comment from his seniors, and without inspiring the particular regret of the whole ship's company. To be a sailor and a man would have been all in his day's work. His whole day's work in fact. But the Prince of Wales was the Prince of Wales and future King of England, as well as being a small unit of the British Navy, and as such could not escape special cynosure. In a battleship, as at a service training institution, that fact had its disadvantages, in that he had to demonstrate the possession of qualities which are taken for granted in one of the crowd. That he left the *Hindustan* sincerely regretted and regretting was therefore no empty flourish of farewell to a young Royal personage, but a sincere tribute to a Prince who had proved himself a comrade.

Shortly after the conclusion of the cruise I was in

a Service Club in London in a group which included the Captain of the *Hindustan*. Somebody asked him about the Prince. “ There are no flies on that young man,” he answered briefly, and drained his cocktail with a significant gesture.

The *Hindustan* oriented the Prince. On that cruise he got his personal bearings. It acted as a sextant upon his inchoate ideas and his various experiences up-to-date. He had tested his own capacities as a common unit, and obtained a detached view of himself as a Royal personage. He had practised ‘ the game,’ and gained a self-mastery and a self-confidence. To the inhibitions and obligations of a Prince had been added the fine comradeship of the gun-room and the discipline of the Navy. In fact, the latter had completely swamped the former. He felt much more of a sailor than he felt anything else. He wanted to be nothing else. Love of the sea and life in the Royal Navy was born in him by that cruise. He had found himself, and that self was clad in the simple blue of the Senior Service. He left the *Hindustan* with the determination of doing all that was possible to make the Navy his one and only profession.

But he had not at that time realised the width and variety of his future responsibilities as visualised by his father. He had yet to learn that his own inclinations would be of even less importance after leaving the *Hindustan* than they were before he embarked, and that for him a naval training was no more than a small portion of his equipment for his future career.

Before the Prince entered on the next concrete stage of his education there was an interlude of a few

months, which he spent in France with a family of the French *noblesse*. He was sent there to complete his knowledge of the French language, to perfect his accent, and to study French life and politics. This period is not one that had a specific influence in the moulding of his character, but as he lived there as a member of this French family and was young enough readily to absorb its atmosphere, it had some effect upon his outlook and is worthy of mention in these pages. French family life reacted upon the Prince in much the same way as it does upon any Englishman of his age and temperament, though not quite to the same extent, for his previous experiences had been adult enough to insulate him against a ready surrender to the emotions of a temporary environment. His tutor was with him, and so to a certain extent was his job. Further, the families of the French aristocracy are still somewhat mediæval in their attitude to inherited rank, and punctilious in their observance of courtly conventions. The society in which the Prince mingled was carefully selected by his hosts, who had an adequate conception of their responsibilities in entertaining the young heir to the British Throne. At the same time, the Prince was coming into contact with a point of view which was entirely new to him. He was becoming acquainted with a warmer and more human social relationship than is permitted by the code of the young British naval officer, or is customary amongst Court officials, statesmen, A.B.'s and other typical representatives of British phlegm and emotional self-consciousness. One cannot imagine, for instance, any feminine member

of Buckingham Palace staff exclaiming to the Prince : “ Mon pauvre petit Prince,” as did a certain dame in the domestic establishment of the Marquis de Breteuil. And never in England had the Prince been greeted with quite the same natural smiling intimacy as marked the attitude of all classes with which he came in contact in France. He was frequently abashed by the frankness of affectionate demonstrations in and about Paris, but secretly he rather liked it. It appealed to and fed an intrinsic gregariousness of temperament in him that had up to that date suffered a lot of artificial repression. It may be said, therefore, that this stay in France influenced his personality, not only by widening his knowledge and developing his point of view, but chiefly by providing at the right moment an antidote to an insular standardisation of his psychology.

In France specialists taught him much of French life, internal economy, industries, sport, and those aspects of a nation which, like the language, can only be adequately absorbed by residence in the country. But most of all, the French people proved to him that spontaneous sentiment and ready amiability are not necessarily to be regarded as rather sloppy gestures that are beneath the dignity of a decently masculine young Englishman.





## CHAPTER V

### CIVIL LIFE

THE fourth phase of substantial influence on the Prince was provided by a community that is as different from the Royal Navy as was the *Hindustan* from Buckingham Palace. And that was the University of Oxford. With the inception of this new *milieu* of thought and action came the Prince's first concrete conception of the weight of his own destiny. When one tries to impress on people—as I often do—that being Prince of Wales is an infernally hard job of work minus most of the privileges that make life tolerable for the rest of us, one usually is answered: "Probably it is a bit of a nuisance, but then, he has always been used to that kind of thing." The inference of a comment like this is, that if one carries artificial weight long enough, it ceases to chafe: whereas the opposite is the case in common experience. The load becomes more onerous. It also implies that the Prince is naturally impervious to the human desire of wanting to be as 'well off' in the matter of liberty and comfort as the other fellow—which ambition is the basis of individual effort and the inspiration of social evolution, including Communism.

Obviously this view does not bear examination, and it is clearly founded on the subconscious idea that Providence puts a special kind of material into

the composition of a Prince. If I have not already destroyed that illusion, I would like to add that even at his present age of 31, if it were possible to completely disguise his identity and place him on a quarter-deck with the two stripes of a Naval Lieutenant on his coat cuffs, or on a parade ground with the three stars of an Army Captain on his shoulder-straps, you would be quite unable to pick him out from his brother officers. And not an officer in 'ward-room' or 'ante-room' would find anything about their comrade that would single him out for special curiosity excepting for his personality. Either as a Naval Officer or an Army Officer he would be assimilated perfectly. Admitting this, one can readily imagine his feelings at being torn from the Navy against his will and inclination, and thrust into a channel of life that was so absolutely different. I should very much like to know what would be the action of the average young sailor of spirit who loves his job as the Prince loved the Navy when told by his people that he had to give up the sea. I know what many of my sailor friends would have done; they would have stuck to the sea, even if doing so involved disinheritance and a cargo-boat. The Prince hated leaving the Navy just as much as this; but for him it was 'the game' to bite on his own wishes and play up to his obligations. He had no alternative. He could no more elude his duty as Prince than he had eluded his duty as a sailor. He had learned what duty meant, and he had learned what was up to him.

To the Prince of Wales Oxford was much more of

a definite proposition than it is to the average fresher who proceeds there from a public school. To him a University was not the culminating stage of his previous education but a revolutionary change in it. Neither was it an adolescent adventure. In practical effect it was an entirely new beginning. As a trained and qualified member of a combatant profession, he had to readjust himself to the position of student in a civilian finishing academy. I need hardly add that there is an immense difference between life on a battleship and life in a university, and lest it be considered that in view of the Prince's youth and premature withdrawal from the Navy, I am unduly stressing this gulf, I would state that a junior 'snotty's' mind is usually more inveterately nautical than that of his senior colleagues. Further, the Prince's affection for the Navy was deepened beyond the average by his experiences as a Prince and by the constant frustration of his own desires. Also, in mind and outlook, the Prince had become much older than his years, despite the fact that he had retained his juvenility of heart and appearance.

The Prince arrived at Oxford as a 'fresher' just as unobtrusively and in the same 'on a level' manner as he entered Osborne as a cadet. He had a simple set of rooms at Magdalen in the Cloister quadrangle like any other undergraduate, with no police guard, sentry, or other evidence of his rank or importance. He attired himself in grey flannel 'bags,' a tweed coat, and a commoner's gown; kept biscuits, cheese, and wine in his sideboard; and his rooms were attended to by the usual Varsity 'scout.' But his

personal tutor, Mr. Hansell, was with him, to keep him in touch with his responsibilities as Prince of Wales, and to maintain, under the direction of the King, a supervising eye upon his programme of studies and his relaxations.

But those three months on a battleship in the North Sea as a unit of the Navy had created in the Prince the habit of personal independence and a distaste for a special monitor, however kindly and well intentioned. He 'ran' himself as a midshipman, as laid down by the customs and regulations of the Navy, and he more or less insisted upon 'running' himself as an undergraduate according to the traditions of Oxford University.

But though he exercised his own will and was at times obstinate, he was a *sahib* at heart, and did not 'run away' with Hansell or ignore his own obligations. His training in specific responsibilities had been as effective as his experiment in comparative freedom: much more so in fact, for the latter had been brief and contingent on the demands of a naval discipline, whilst the former had been long and persistent. Still, for all that he did not permit his responsibilities to intrude themselves unduly upon his life as an undergraduate, though there were many occasions where they did cramp his style. One of these was the 'talking shop'—the Union. Being Prince of Wales, he could not get up on his hind legs and wade into a debate, because as Prince he was debarred from taking sides in questions of the day. But that particular restriction did not keep him awake at night, for he had not much use

for the sound of his own voice, and seldom attended the Union Meetings.

He 'cut' lectures as often as any undergraduate reasonably could, though less than he would have liked. When he attended lectures, he did not go in a state coach or in the middle of a staff retinue, but trickled across the quadrangle with the other fellows, complete with notebook, pencil, flannel bags, and gown, taking no particular notice of anything or anybody, and receiving no particular attention.

At that time Balliol was an absolute 'hot shop' of Socialism. There was more fervid communal 'gas' to the square foot in Balliol than to the square tub-thumping acre in Hyde Park. The Prince seldom missed the weekly lecture in 'hall' at Balliol, and the views he heard expressed in that college were a joy to him as well as an education. They fed his sense of humour, but also induced reflection on lines which would have struck him as flagrant heresy aboard the *Hindustan*. But the revolutionary socialism that was preached at Balliol, though as ardent and Utopian as the Marble Arch variety, was less perspiring and more balanced, despite the youth and enthusiasm of its protagonists. There was the breath of the games-fields in the Balliol brand of Bolshevism. The rights of the 'haves' were recognised equally with the rights of the 'have-nots.' A case in point was the decision of a group of these social anarchists that 'Pragger-Wagger' was entitled to wander into a Balliol lecture without being 'bored' by a group of curious townspeople and tourists gathering at the gate to observe the passage of the Heir Apparent. On one occasion

they lay doggo at an upper window, and as the 'rubberers' crowded in on the heels of the Prince, damped their curiosity with jets of water from various domestic and toilet vessels.

During the Prince's first term at Oxford the curiosity of the townspeople and visitors made life rather a nuisance for him, and gave him his first solid experience of the discomfort of being a public character. He spent quite a lot of time in inventing stratagems for eluding this espionage and a certain amount of breath in cursing it. As a matter of fact, he was not invariably good-humoured towards this form of interference with his movements, because the experience was comparatively new to him, and he had not then developed his present standard of toleration. But even a Prince of Wales ceases to be a spectacle when he is visible every day. Oxford is an old town, and its people have a sense of proportion which came to the top in due course, and enabled the Prince of Wales to walk down the 'high' or anywhere else with much the same freedom as any other 'undergrad.'

So in that respect his handicap ceased to be a bar to perfect assimilation. One incident of imported curiosity over which Oxford chuckled at the time may not be too hoary for repetition here. An American visitor and his family complete with guide-book, a thirst for knowledge, and a veneration for such National Institutions as the old University and the young Prince of Wales, removed a cigar from a 'nonsense' jaw, and enquired of a passing undergraduate outside Magdalen College—"Excuse me, sir, but is it right here that the Prince of Wales lives?"

Pausing a few seconds in his stride, the Oxford man turned his back upon Magdalen and the humble staircase that led up to the Prince's rooms and indicated the imposing block of New Buildings just opposite. "That, sir, is the Prince of Wales's Oxford residence!"

The exclamations of the party were appropriate and suggested that at last they had met something in England which was on a par with their ideas as to what should be. As they followed up the undergraduate with further queries pitched in an awed key, the latter drew their eager attention to the deer browsing quietly in the deer park near New Buildings.

"Royal deer specially imported from the Pyrenees for the Prince to hunt!"

"Some Prince," exclaimed the American in breathless admiration.

The undergraduate passed on.

The comparative freedom of an undergraduate's life gave the Prince of Wales his first real opportunity of indulging generously in games and sports. He hunted with three packs, played polo, some tennis, and a little golf. He also played a certain amount of 'soccer' in the Magdalen second eleven, and became as familiar with the experience of finding himself on his back in the mud as did any other player. Being the lightest weight in the team, he usually finished a game with a portion of the 'ground' adhering to his person. But he was very fast, and when any player in an opposing team wanted to bring down the Prince just for the fun of rolling a future King in



the mud, he had to work extremely hard for the privilege.

The popular games, such as football and golf, had no special appeal for the Prince at that time. He played them because they were the vogue and because he wanted to do everything that everybody else did. To polo and hunting, however, his reactions were of a different character. These two forms of physical effort captured his imagination and expressed his own temperament. From preferences they became obsessions.

How much of this ardour at Oxford for hunting and polo was due to the outlet these pursuits offered to his natural spirit of adventure and initiative, and how much to the fact that the back of a horse gave him a social and physical equality with all, is a question that is comparatively unimportant. I doubt if he could answer it himself. But the factor that was important in the rapid growth of his affection for hunting and polo at Oxford was his equerry, Major the Hon. W. G. S. Cadogan of the 10th Hussars. Not only at games, but in outlook and point of view, Cadogan influenced the Prince enormously. At the time, the Prince naturally was not conscious of this any more than any young man is conscious of the extent to which his individuality is being influenced by that of the constant companionship and example of a man whose character and qualities he admires. It is my opinion, however—and I know the Prince concurs—that Cadogan was the strongest personal influence of the Prince's Oxford days, and quite possibly the most permanent and intimate influence he has yet en-

countered. I regret that I never knew Cadogan or ever met him, but I know enough of him to be able to say that he was of the type of British officer who is loved as much by the rank and file of his regiment as by his brother officers. He was a fine rider, polo player, athlete, and all-round sportsman, but his personality embodied the finest traditions of his profession and his caste. He was clear-minded, courteous, efficient, and straight as a die. Plenty of imagination, yet simple and direct; brave, yet unassuming and selfless.

He was seconded from his regiment to accompany the Prince to Oxford as equerry. He became more than equerry. He quickly became the Prince's intimate friend and something of his ideal. Most men of the age the Prince was then form one unique friendship that stands alone in their experience; a friend who is comrade, hero, and inspiration. To the Prince, Cadogan was that friend. He had the qualities which the Prince most admired: he had had the experience which the Prince envied.

In years he was older than the Prince: in heart he was of the same age. On balance they were practically contemporary. The Prince's restraint and responsibilities had matured his mind and view-point to a considerable degree. Cadogan's life in the army and the games-field had kept him young.

But though Cadogan, in his capacity of equerry and companion, was a component part of the Prince's life at Oxford, and must be considered in reflecting upon his development in those two years, it must be borne in mind that the Prince, besides being impres-

sionable, had already acquired a quiet depth of character which preserved the integrity of his own individuality.

To this individuality his friendship with Major Cadogan, and the example of Cadogan, added much. But it was an addition. It was not a substitution. Despite the qualification, the association was none the less vital, particularly in the hunting-field and on the polo-ground.

Reverting to the detail of the Prince's life at Oxford, I am reminded of another amusing incident in which he figured. One night he was playing one of his 'comic' musical instruments in his room—whilst several of his neighbours were 'sporting the oak' and trying to work behind that protection. A closed door in these old Magdalen rooms demands an open window as an alternative to suffocation. Through these windows came the ear-piercing strains of the Prince's musical efforts. On the night to which I refer half a dozen undergraduates, getting bored by the row, assembled beneath the Prince's window and commenced a protest in kind, on tin whistles, banjos, saucepans, and other improvised instruments of aural torture. The Prince accepted the challenge. He discarded his fiddle or whatever instrument he was playing at the time, and tuned up his bag-pipes. In a few minutes he got the pipes going in full blast, filling the midnight air with unearthly shrieks and piercing screams, until the fellows down below gave up the unequal struggle and retired in disorder to their rooms.

This incident was, however, somewhat exceptional.

It is typical of the Prince as he is to-day, but it was not typical of him as he was then. Though he adapted himself thoroughly to Oxford customs, he did not readily fuse into undergraduate ways. In him there was always the conflict between what he was supposed to do, what he wanted to do, and what he could do. Figuratively speaking, he was never quite sure where he was. He had found himself in the Navy, but Oxford necessitated another orientation. The theme of his training had been the complete subordination of self, and the constant reiteration of this principle had bred a personal reserve and diffidence through which his animal spirits showed only in flashes, in any unfamiliar environment where his Royal obligations jostled his elbow. His own will was awake and his own individuality was alert, but so was the curb-bit. But though the Prince did not fling himself with typical undergraduate abandon into Oxford 'rags,' he held himself aloof from nothing.

It would have been difficult for any uninformed person who was not familiar with the features and appearance of the Prince of Wales, to have singled him out from amongst his fellow undergraduates at Oxford. In class 'hall' and at games he was entirely without any affectation or sign of consciousness of being on a higher social plane than the humblest student at the University. In fact, his absolute lack of anything approaching side or Royal dignity when amongst the other men came as a shock to many who were aware of his identity and expected to find about him some obvious signs of his Royal birth and his high office. It was not a shock of disappointment, but

a shock of profound astonishment that the heir to the British Throne should be so remarkably ordinary, so much one of the crowd ; so completely unreserved, inconsequential and typically an undergraduate. The most sophisticated of people and the most unsophisticated alike expect to find in a Prince of Wales something—a habit, a manner, or a personal aura—which definitely distinguishes him from Tom, Dick, or Harry, and marks him out as a being apart who is merely stooping to the ordinary human level as an act of grace and courtesy. The traditional glorification of kings and princes, the sanctity and privilege which surrounds their persons, and places a barrier of feudal pomp, grandeur, and almost holy isolation around their lives and circumstances, inspires in the most material and cynical mind of the twentieth century the expectation of this visible halo. In fact, it almost demands as a right ocular evidence of Royal altitude.

Undergraduate Oxford, which is very pleased with itself at being undergraduate Oxford, was no stranger to the feeling or to the spectacle of adequate self-appreciation. It was quite prepared to find that the Prince of Wales was similarly pleased with himself at being Prince of Wales and ready to grant him the right of showing that he was aware of the fact that he was the Prince of Wales.

But though this lack of Royal reserve and traditional aloofness surprised young Oxford, it thrilled it and made its variegated heart beat with a loyalty that could not have been inspired by anything less vital and human than this boy who had left his Royal

dignities and high-mightiness behind him at Buckingham Palace.

I was not at Oxford with the Prince, but I know many men who were, and I have been told dozens of stories which provide undeniable testimony to the effect the Prince had on his fellow undergraduates. One I have in mind illustrates this exactly. At one of the colleges, I forget which, was a rampant, tearing Socialist from the Midlands, who had commenced life in a nail factory at the age of eight, educated himself, laboriously saved money, entered into local politics as a reactionary firebrand of the most ruddy hue, and arrived at Oxford at the age of thirty-three with a red tie, a tin trunk, and enough corrosive convictions to Bolshevis Britain. He had gone to the University to equip himself with the rhetorical weapons of the class he was fighting. I gather that he was a cool, calculating devil, whose heart was under his hat and who had the same use for tradition as a furnace has for fuel.

One night this modern Marat had foregathered over beer and tobacco with a few ardent young blades who were as keen on the theoretic reform of society as he was upon its demolition, when the Prince strolled in with a musical instrument under his arm to renew acquaintance with the man whose rooms they were in and with whom he had been playing footer the previous afternoon. Three or four of the party promptly and politely disengaged their heroic forms from various long chairs that were in antithesis of the theories which had just been expounded from their luxurious depths. The Prince waved them back with a gesture

and the remark with which the typical undergraduate deprecates fuss: "For God's sake sit down." And he sat down himself on the corner of the table amongst the beer bottles and commenced to uncase his banjo—or whatever it was.

"I say, Blank"—to his host—"that was a hot shot you scored with yesterday. Wish I had a kick like it. Show me how you did it, with this"—proffering the empty instrument case.

There was a yell of delight from one young blood, and a swift exchange of enthusiastic football chat amongst the athletic young gods of social reform. After a minute or two there came a 'dip' in the conversation, partly caused by the new table ornament being the Prince of Wales, and partly by recollection of the conversation at the moment of his entrance which had revolved around the abolition of monarchies. In the corner where the nail-maker sat there was a distinct vacuum of hang-dog awkwardness which the Prince—if he noticed it at all—probably attributed to the discomfort which his presence often evoked amongst people who had not met him before.

"Here's luck, everybody!" he said, picking up a glass of beer from the table. And then running his fingers along the strings of his banjo and leaning his head forward, a wicked twinkle in his eyes, he commenced to sing and play the 'Red Flag'—or its predecessor.

Like magic every vestige of awkwardness disappeared, every voice joined laughingly, heartily, and every eye flamed with a sudden regard for that slight human figure who represented all the things they had

been damning a few moments previously. By the time he had led them into 'Swanee River' and two or three other old airs, there was probably only one man in that smoke-laden room who would not have cheerfully swopped all his class theories for the honour of 'running the gauntlet' for the Crown.

After the Prince had gone, Blank said to the nail-maker: "What about the proletariat?"

"Proletariat," repeated the nail-maker gravely. He rose slowly to his feet and went to the table. "I'll give you a toast." He raised his glass, looked deliberately from face to face and said: "The Prince of Wales—God bless him."

He drained the glass, replaced it on the table, ran his fingers through his hair and walked out of the room. That is the story as it was told to me by Blank. The only thing in it of which I am uncertain is the banjo.

If this story should need any support, from my own personal knowledge I would say that several times when I have gone with the Prince to informal shows amongst people who have not come into personal contact with him, people of varied political opinions and different creeds, I have seen him do similar things. Diffidence, detachment, doubt, formality, rivalries have been swept away by him in a few minutes. With the spontaneity of that love at first sight which is the epic of the young and sentimental poets, I have seen affection, loyalty, and enthusiasm blaze up and fuse to the Prince and all that he represents. With no effort, and I think no conscious intent, he brings down tradition from its cold and lofty altar and gives it



human life and human touch. With a smile and fine brotherhood he places the hand of the past into the palm of the present, and pushes class and caste prejudice into the melting-pot where they belong. But this incident, like the one of the bagpipes, was isolated. It was not a habit of his. It was, as it were, a momentary eruption of his growing personality. Yet a significant one.

I wonder how many men outside the 'set' or opinions of Blank and his guests would have gone along to those rooms that night in such a friendly, casual fashion, and how many could have 'got away with it' as the Prince did. I know quite a few who pride themselves upon their democratic opinions, tact, and principles of toleration, who would have passed Blank in the 'High' on account of the shape of his trousers and cut the nail-maker stone dead for his accent. But I cannot think of anyone but the Prince who would have been capable of joining that party without betraying some hint of patronage or superiority, either by the curl of a lip or the flicker of an eyelid, which would have put the kibosh on mutual goodwill and have caused the nail-maker to lay in a bigger stock of red ties and class invective. The point is that it was not 'up to' the Prince to wander round the colleges digging out men to whom polo and hunting were the profligate pastimes of the idle rich. It was not his duty to tinkle a banjo in the ears of any old set that happened to be up at Oxford, or call on any fellow who happened to play footer in the same team. He did it because he felt like doing it, and quite possibly because someone had suggested to him that Blank

and his pals were all right on the football field but 'absolutely impossible' anywhere else.

It will be seen, therefore, that at Oxford the Prince was absorbing much more than was provided by custom and his college syllabus, and that he was teaching young Oxford a few obvious things.

It is generally understood that the Prince made his first practical acquaintance with soldiering as a Lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards. As a matter of fact, he began his military career as a full-blown private in the Oxford University Officers' Training Corps. In case it may be assumed that an O.T.C. is a form of shop-window soldiering where a man does nothing more onerous than wear a uniform of khaki serge and carry a service rifle on a photographic parade, let me say that it is a corps where a man performs the duties of a private of the line and at the same time learns to be an officer.

The Prince of Wales did his weekly drills and his musketry parades in precisely the same way as an ordinary private soldier. It is the custom of all branches of the army to treat all recruits, officers and men, as though they had never before handled a rifle or done a right-about-turn. The Prince of Wales had done a certain amount of drill as a cadet and midshipman, and knew a certain amount about the rifle. But the knowledge he had acquired of these subjects in the Navy did not absolve him from commencing at A B C in the Officers' Training Corps. From a military point of view his knowledge was probably far less than he thought it was. But it was as much as it need have been had he cared to accept the offered

privilege of considering his recruit course as 'passed.' He was, however, accepting no privileges even in regard to the tiresome detail of 'handling' and 'care of arms,' or the monotony of squad-drill. And when a musketry instructor stripped a rifle bolt and smilingly asked him to name its parts, the Prince of Wales answered grimly, "I'm hanged if I remember, but I'll soon learn." So he learned the ninety-seven parts of a service rifle from a British N.C.O. as one of a squad and received the catechism thereof from the same callous source and in the same casual company. Gravely and entirely without self-consciousness he passed through the drill of aiming at a black-board target with a Lee-Enfield clamped on a tripod, of lying on his stomach, in the prone position, snapping at an aiming disc held by a critical N.C.O., of rapid loading and firing with dummy cartridges: and with nonchalance placed his hand within and above the sweating paw of his instructor in the ordinary course of instruction in trigger pressing, as imperturbably as if he had never handled arms before. And on the square he 'fell in' with the 'awkward squad' and submitted himself cheerfully to the barking commands of a drill instructor whose business it was to teach drill 'without arms,' and to assume that the maximum drill knowledge of any recruit was his ability to tell his right foot from his left foot. Here the Prince of Wales 'formed fours,' 'formed squad,' 'righted,' 'lefted,' and 'quick-marched' with the best and the worst and never turned a hair, excepting when he was a trifle late or a shade 'previous' in jumping to an order.

It may seem that I am unduly stressing this voluntary submission of the Prince to recruits' training, but when I mention that the ordinary Sandhurst boy hates like poison the system of being put through recruits' drill on joining his unit, because it offends his dignity as a young officer to have to commence his regimental work on the same level as a recruit who has only a fraction of his own military knowledge, you can appreciate the fact as a sidelight on his character, or at any rate the strength of his desire to shirk nothing.

To pass through the alphabetical stages of a soldier's training in the O.T.C. was not necessary to the schemes of his 'Varsity education. He had gone to Oxford to study history, languages, and men. He elected to go through the whole mill as a raw recruit because he had acquired the habit of seeing a thing through from the beginning, and because he was so deeply imbued with a dislike of 'cutting' anything that the other fellow could not cut. He was Prince all right, and there was no getting away from that fact, but he was also 'an ordinary undergraduate.' So he did not regard his recruit's course in the O.T.C. as a 'comic joke,' or consider it as an insult to his former profession. He looked upon it as an ordinary human privilege which he would not forgo, and as part of 'the game.'

In the O.T.C. the Prince did not confine his activities to his purely military duties, but extended it to the donkey-work of common fatigues. During the annual training, when his corps went under canvas as an affiliated unit of the Territorial Army, he took his share

of all the 'duties' of camp. He slept in an ordinary army bell tent with five other fellows and his feet to the tent pole. At réveillé each morning he washed in a platoon basin, scuffled for his uniform, and scrambled out to 'fall in' with his party for whatever task it was detailed.

He was then a corporal, with a couple of stripes on his arm and the experience of the *Hindustan* under his cap. Being a corporal, he did not have to carry an iron dixie up to the cook-house for the morning tea, or 'hump' a sack to the quartermaster's store for rations. He had to 'boss' parties that performed these tasks in the cold and draughty dawn; and he saw that they did the job properly. He was only about half as big as most of his section and a couple of years younger, but he had commanded hefty sailors in the North Sea and had a lurid vocabulary, a combination which goes a long way in the inspiration of wholesome respect in Service circles.

The effect of Oxford upon the Prince's character was, I think, inconsiderable, but this conclusion is no reflection upon the University or upon the Prince. A University does not claim to be a moulding establishment. It does not force ideas upon a man, but enables him to elaborate, develop, modify, or lose any particular ideas that are peculiar to him as an individual or as a representative of a class. He attends such lectures and does such work as he wishes or as his circumstances dictate, and pursues such objects as his fancy or career demands. He can hold and air any view he possesses; he can play such games as appeal to him: he can refuse to play any games at all. He

can mix with any 'set' or keep to himself. He can utilise his opportunities for work, or he can devote himself to having an extremely pleasant time. There are, of course, rules to be observed, but those rules sit lightly upon the free expression of individuality and do not obliterate personal idiosyncrasies. In other words, a man grows as he likes or as his own particular 'set' influences him.

Therefore, as a specific and definite influence upon the character of the Prince of Wales, Oxford was of little account in comparison with Osborne, Dartmouth, the *Hindustan*, and his own family. But it developed his self-reliance and extended his perspective. Above all, it flung him into daily contact with a large number of his father's civilian subjects. It developed his own personality, and it introduced that personality to a great number of young men of all classes and creeds, who would in future speak of him in the outer world as they found him at Oxford.

At Oxford the Prince struck that note which has since become the major-chord of his personality. He did not strike it frequently, for, as I have described, he was diffident and unsure of himself. But he struck it with definite effect. He was completely unaware of Oxford's reactions to himself, or that he had achieved anything in the way of an effect. He had merely been himself as far as was possible, according to the 'level' of conduct that he had learned in his naval training, and as far as possible according to the natural inclinations of a perfectly normal and gregarious young man.

The note to which I refer is that 'human note' which is worked to death by enthusiastic and other

admirers of the Prince ; usually in appreciation of a day's hand-shaking, a night's dancing, a chat with a wounded ex-soldier, or a smile at somebody's sticky-faced baby. I am not belittling the qualities of these forms of Royal relativity or minimising their appeal, but the 'human note' of my meaning is that spirit of intrinsic comradeship which goes down to bed-rock, mental and physical, and lingers in the memory and the heart when the above ephemeral and superficial demonstrations of social grace are as forgotten as the man who slaps you on the back in the polling booth. It is partially elucidated by a man of the Prince's years at Oxford who remarked : " Of course he was simply priceless. It was deuced difficult to remember sometimes that he was the Prince of Wales. Yet, on the other hand, one was infernally glad that he was."

It was not so much an achievement for the Prince to forget rank as it was to make young Oxford forget it. Yet this he did. Oxford's representative and varied gathering of critical young civilians accepted him as one of themselves in precisely the same way as had the officers and men of the *Hindustan*.

In the human aspect, and in the interests of his official future, these Oxford days were of no small importance in the growth of the Prince of Wales ; no man can be a big leader—a leader for a lifetime—and an article of faith to his followers, unless he has lived with them and played with them as one of them. If an employer of labour sees nothing of his people but their output returns he is regarded merely as an evil that is necessary to the pay-sheet, a figure-head to whom shall be rendered under sufferance and con-

tract a certain number of hours' labour per day—or less. If the commanding officer of a regiment confines his connection with officers and men to the orderly room and the parade ground, he also will become merely an authority that has to be endured. In neither case will eager service be yielded or loyalty inspired. The relationship will be mechanical and it will be temporary. Therefore, in the mere act of living at a University as an ordinary undergraduate without any Royal trappings, privilege, or ceremony, of being a man amongst other men, a plain citizen amongst plain citizens, the Prince of Wales was laying a firm foundation for himself as Prince and future ruler, and establishing himself as a human entity. To sit shoulder to shoulder with a man in a lecture hall, to roll with him in the mud of a football field, to ride neck-and-neck with him in the scurry of hounds, or to join him in the irresponsible gaiety of the dance floor or row with him on the river, is to forge a bond that is greater than precedent or politics. It is to beget a mutual respect, an interest, and an understanding that will endure and grow.





## CHAPTER VI

### THE ARMY

**B**EING a soldier myself, I am disposed to think that the influence of the spirit and traditions of a British regiment is the most lasting and powerful of any that a man can meet, whether he be a Prince or a prize-fighter.

I have seen men of every type, class, character, age, and belief come under the influence and gradually surrender to it the best that was in them. I have known men in the ranks recruited from the riff-raff of a city, who would have robbed their own mothers for the price of a pot of beer or a bout of self-indulgence, cheerfully share everything they had with a comrade and readily give their lives for the honour of the regiment. You can hear old soldiers who are workless and destitute in the backwaters of civilian life, neglected in their post-service struggles by an ungrateful country, curse the Government, reproach themselves, and damn England. But in their worst moments you will never hear them refer to their old regiments except with pride or in a sort of sacred whisper.

It is not easy to define exactly this regimental spirit, but one can describe in a phrase its principal effect upon the individual. That phrase is 'the

immolation of self.' By this I do not mean that soldiering changes human nature by killing the individual instinct, destroying personal ambition, abolishing natural predilection, and generally fitting Thomas Atkins with a pair of luminous wings. But what I do mean is that it harnesses and directs these impulses to the good of the community instead of to the satisfaction of the individual. *Esprit de corps*, discipline, and force of example knock personal egotism out of a man and replace it with pride of regiment. This makes him act and reason from a new angle. It impels and inspires him to govern his inclinations according to their reactions on his comrades, instead of towards the fulfilment of his own temperament or the pursuit of his own ends. The soldier realises that work and duty are not merely onerous alternatives to an empty stomach, but the hallmarks of a man and the pride of finer men than he. Through the clear, unflinching eyes of that concentrated community whose past deeds have their living evidence in the vital panoply around him, he sees himself as a thing of not much account and his job as everything. Before he entered the Army he might be the pride of his village or the terror of his town ; or, if an officer, the cock of his school or a budding county magnate. But when he joins his regiment he is a unit of a corporate entity that takes no stock of individual importance or external distinction, but puts in their place a pride of united achievement and the honour of belonging to his corps : with the creed of regiment first and all other things after. The gospel of this creed is : Do your duty, pull your weight, and keep fit ; reverse this

sequence and then begin again. If you have any energy left, use it as you please so long as it does not impair the honour of the regiment or let down a comrade. When there is a war on which sends up the *morale* of the whole nation and the fighting man comes to his own, the regimental spirit flames to heroic proportions and magic intensity.

Into such an environment and such an atmosphere entered the Prince of Wales when he became a subaltern in the Grenadier Guards, a regiment where this spirit of sacrifice of self and implicit devotion to duty is carried to its extreme.

By this time, which was his third year at Oxford, interrupted by the war, H.R.H. had both a will of his own and a way of his own, which did not always coincide with the will and the ways of higher authority.

There was some talk of his returning to the Navy to which he was trained. Into this discussion intervened the suggestion that it might be a bad move to put the Heir to the Throne on a ship which would be at the mercy of any enterprising German submarine. The Prince's own opinion of this suggestion had nothing whatever to do with the safety of the Heir Apparent, for he considered that he had a sister and brothers who could inherit a Throne as well as he. But the Prince did think it would be "damned hard lines on any ship's company" to have him on board, "as the enemy submarine fleet would hang on like a pack of hounds to the scent of a fox, and the ship would not stand the ghost of a chance."

His natural impulse was to return to the Service in which he had been professionally trained, and which

had enslaved his affections. Like any other sailor, he considered the Navy to be *the* fighting arm, and himself to be part of it. But he expressed himself as I have related immediately he realised that his presence on a ship would make that vessel a particular target for the German fleet. His specific desire for the Navy was still further modified by the fact that in the early days of the War the Navy was in the background of popular imagination so far as active combat was concerned. The Army held the stage. It was the soldier who was at Mons, and the Marne, and in the Press, and on every tongue at home. The Expeditionary Force was hard at it, whereas the Navy might not get a 'show' at all. H.R.H., like the rest of us, and particularly men of his age and temperament, at that time intended to get to the spot where the fighting was in progress. One can vividly recall the passionate wave of military enthusiasm which swept the country in 1914, and how irksome and galling men found the various and simple formalities of getting into khaki, and such essential delays in drafting them across to the scene of action as were necessitated by preliminary training, equipment, and organisation. The Prince was as impatient as the most eager person in the country, but his desires were frustrated at every turn by his circumstances.

The King and the Cabinet had their views on the subject, which were dictated by questions of State, policy, and even strategy. It was finally agreed that there was no objection to him joining the Army. And to that extent—with reservations—it would be desirable in the public interest to encourage his fervent

wish. The reservations were that he should not be sent to the front. Officially, the qualification was a secret from the Prince. In actual fact, he was aware of it. And he was determined to defeat it. He made up his mind that nothing should keep him in England when he was qualified to be sent to France. His intention was not inspired by abstract and high-flown patriotic motives such as are extolled by conventional sentiment and inflamed by heroic pens, but which I have never heard a fighting man or would-be fighting man mention as his intrinsic motive. It was inspired by the concrete incentive of wanting to do his 'bit' in the forward line of the 'game' that other fellows were playing, and by the spirit of adventure and combat which is a common heritage. The ardour of his desire was intensified by the artificial inhibitions which had always surrounded him. The Prince sub-consciously saw in active service an outlet for the primitive impulses of chance and free action which had for so long been bottled up by his destiny.

Here at last was an opportunity of self-expression, of a leap out of the dull rut of Royal inevitability: of dodging the 'Don'ts,' and eluding the 'Musts': of wriggling clear of a ready-made and closely supervised life: of escaping the appalling certainties of a mathematical formula: of being a person instead of a personage.

At the time the Prince joined the Grenadiers there was a certain amount of cynical but good-humoured speculation amongst over-worked subalterns of other regiments as to the amount of dull routine work which H.R.H. would do—or, rather, would not do—

in his new capacity as a guardee. And it was assumed, very naturally, in consideration of the 'pull' which his Royal rank would give him with any C.O., even a C.O. of Guards, that he would take jolly good care to keep off the 'roster' for 'fatigues' and 'orderly dog'; and that he would participate in none of those empty-stomach functions of dawn, called 'early morning parades,' which are hated by every officer who is junior enough in rank for compulsory attendance. It was presumed that H.R.H. would spend those uncomfortable military hours within his 'fleabag' or whatever luxurious equivalent for that article of kit was at his exalted disposal. This Service point of view of the Prince as a soldier man was due to the fervent belief that no subaltern in full possession of his senses would miss any opportunity of wangling his way clear of the unpleasant and monotonous sections of military duty.

In actual fact, the reverse line was taken by H.R.H. He performed precisely the same duties as any other officer of his rank, regiment, and location. It is a fact that he was notified by regimental headquarters that he was relieved of certain routine duties, and that there were certain parades which he was not expected to attend. But he announced his intention of conforming to 'Standing Orders' in every respect, and eluding none of the mechanical details of his job as a junior subaltern. "If I don't do it," said he to the Adjutant, "somebody else has got to do it for me, and I am not having any of that."

In making this remark he was not being a little hero, but he was refusing to be a supernumerary

ornament. Also by this time—as I have mentioned—he had acquired a habit of thoroughness and was bored stiff by superficiality in anything. There was still another aspect to his attitude, and that is the fact that subordinate tasks, which are a burden and a nuisance to a man whose daily round is made up of obscure trivialities, are an absolute relief to the Prince, who has so often to be standing at attention before matters of Imperial importance with the eyes of a nation, a tutor, or a King upon him. As he observed to one senior subaltern who was grouching at having been on ‘fatigue’ three days in succession, and finished up with the remark, “I seem to spend my life in supervising”—“You’re damn lucky. I’ve spent all my life in being supervised.”

In the Standing Orders of the Grenadier Guards it is laid down that the training of a young officer will be carried out under the following principles:

“He must be individually well drilled and set up. He must be taught how to handle a rifle, and to drill in the ranks as a private soldier. He must know his drill as an officer and be proficient in command of a company on parade. He must be taught the main principles of interior economy and discipline, and must be encouraged to apply them on his own responsibility. He is not to be put on duty or in command of a company until he has been passed in drill and in knowledge of these main principles by the officer commanding the battalion. . . .

“Further detailed instruction is then to be given him by the Adjutant and Quartermaster, and by his Captain, as to the conducting of business from the



point of view of these officers respectively. This instruction is to embrace everything concerned with the interior economy of a company in peace and war. . . .

"The instruction given is to be in addition to that prescribed in the Army Regulations regarding training, musketry, and general technical military knowledge."

So in voluntary obedience to the Standing Orders of his regiment, as laid down for the instruction of young officers, and in compliance with the custom of an Army which trains its recruits on the thorough principle of assuming that not one of them can tell the difference between a benediction and a word of command, the Prince of Wales once more took his place in the sweating ranks on 'the square,' and yielded himself to the will of a 'non-com' whose word was law and whose father was probably a policeman or a plumber. But in this brotherhood of arms, as represented by the British Army and a barrack square, no man's father is of any account, so the ancestry of the Prince's temporary commanders did not matter. A private is as good as a Prince when it comes to obeying a command, and the N.C.O. in charge is God Almighty.

Thus, in the Grenadier Guards, the Prince received his first substantial experience of social promiscuity. His daily companions were of all classes and all sorts. He was, therefore, acquiring the foundations of another of his present outstanding characteristics—a perfect 'mixer.' And I would add here that this quality had to be acquired, for up to the time he joined the Grenadiers he was no 'mixer'—in the wider sense of the term.

As the promiscuity of regimental life in intensive preparation for active service stripped away social reserves and all class consciousness, 'square' drill tightened up the Prince's physical fibre and generated an instinctive sense of automatic subversion to the smallest detail of duty—which is another of the marked attributes of his present character.

To those who have no knowledge of Guards' drill beyond witnessing its results in the deportment of a guardsman; the mechanical precision of a marching guard in the streets of London; or the superhuman perfection of the movements of the sentries outside Buckingham and St. James's Palaces, I would say that it is the last word in repetition and meticulous discipline. If a man moves an eyebrow at the wrong moment he is committing a crime. If he has one foot, or his nose, half an inch out of alignment the whole atmosphere vibrates in horror. And if he happens to commit the appalling outrage of dropping his rifle, the whole regiment shakes in its foundations and the demoralised offender is probably given seven days' practice in the art of adhering to his weapon.

Every movement is repeated until it becomes an instinct, and no single detail, however minute, is overlooked or ignored. I have done a course of Guards' drill, so I know exactly what the Prince went through on the Grenadiers' parade ground in those early days, and realise the effect it had upon him. In spite of his enthusiasm, I know he sometimes got fed-up, just as I did. And that he saw it through when he was under no compulsion to do so, other than his own ideas, is one up to him in the way of 'guts.'

There was one particular exercise in which the Prince knew his place from the beginning as a bird knows its own nest from infancy. And that was in the drill of 'sizing' a company for ceremonial. The initial command is, "Tallest on the right—shortest on the left—in single rank—SIZE." Here H.R.H. always permitted himself a smile—and caused one—as he jumped to the executive word of command and doubled his eight stone by 5 ft. 6 in. out to the extreme left flank of the parade, a mere human splinter by comparison with the herculean Grenadiers of 1914.

But even on these drill parades the Prince was learning more than Guards' drill. He was picking up a few things in the point of view of Thomas Atkins, and Thomas Atkins was attaining a similar view of his King's son. There are 'breaks' in a morning's drill which are designed for purpose of rest and to prevent staleness. As a rule, these 'breaks' are used by officers as an opportunity for a smoke or a dash to the mess for refreshments: and by Thomas Atkins in a similar manner. H.R.H. usually utilised these intervals by lighting his pipe and chatting with N.C.O.s and men. He broke down their initial awe of him, by the mere act of being himself a natural human being with a sense of humour and the fine frankness of any other subaltern who is rapidly learning the great Army lesson that all men are men and snobbery is a mental lesion.

"Sir," said a sergeant to the Prince one day during a five minutes' break, "what are the two finest things on earth?" The little group who heard this

question closed in eagerly to hear the Royal answer. And it came.

"A Grenadier, and a woman," replied the Prince, his young eyes twinkling at his own knowledge of the time-honoured Grenadier catechism, and the gratified surprise of the sergeant and the others at the Prince's 'liveness' to this 'tag' of regimental pride.

Contrary to popular supposition even of many of those who have had opportunity to get acquainted with the profession of soldiering, drill on the square formed only a small part of the Prince's training as a guardsman. There was musketry in theory and in practice: as a recruit officer and as a potential instructor. He spent long hours on the range at firing point and in the butts; extending his knowledge of his job and getting to know and getting known by his brother officers and the men he had to lead. He attended with the others of all ranks lectures on tactics, supplies, scouting, hygiene, signalling, guards, picquets, trenching, infantry in attack and defence: *morale*: regimental history: and the hundred and one things that go to the technical education of a professional soldier and the making of an officer. And in the practice of them all he took his place in a squad or a platoon composed of full-blown privates and recruits from every walk of life and every description of home in the kingdom. In this new job of training to be an officer in his father's army, of functioning as a recruit unit of his regiment, he was passing through an experience that was entirely different from any he had known before. This phase of his making had a hundred new angles of view. Those who shared it

and were his daily companions were not the carefully selected cream of socially qualified applicants as at Osborne and Dartmouth. Neither were they the intellectual equals with whom he fraternised at the ancient and more or less exclusive university of Oxford. They were men of all kinds and types, of all standards of intelligence, gathered together by past exigencies of the labour market and the current enthusiasm of war; their only initial qualifications being the physical standards of a regiment of Guards and a good character, supplied by sources that were not always unbiased. I am referring now, of course, to the rank and file of the Grenadiers, with whom he was mixing as a recruit officer in a way he had not mixed with the 'ratings' in the British Navy, because the circumstances of his duties on the *Hindustan* were different.

Concurrently with the study and practice of the technical side of his military education, the Prince was, as I have already indicated, performing the humdrum duties of his junior rank in relation to company administration and the interior economy of his regiment. As Picquet Officer, which corresponds to Orderly Officer in a line regiment, he would turn out at dawn each morning of those days when it was his tour of duty and cheerfully engage himself with those routine tasks which are the bane of existence to the average subaltern. You can imagine him standing at the quartermaster's stores at 6 a.m. accompanied by an N.C.O. gravely inspecting bacon, meat, bread, tea, and sugar, and superintending their issue to the ration parties. You could see him going the round of breakfasts, from barrack-room to barrack-room,



*Photo by C. Vandyk, Ltd., London.*



enquiring of each 'mess' if the food was all right and if any man had a complaint to make regarding its quality, quantity, or variety. And you could witness him taste a dish and express the opinion that it was 'damned good' or 'not as it ought to be,' as the case might be.

At midday, before having his own lunch, he would repeat the above proceedings, and it is a 'byword' in the Guards that he never let a 'grouse' pass uninvestigated.

In between the inspection of meals, H.R.H. inspected latrines, bath-houses, drains, cook-houses, canteens, in pursuance of that ideal of cleanliness and hygienic perfection which is essential to the maintenance of the health and well-being of bodies of men who live and play and work in the close contiguity of military units. There are crowds of British subalterns who are inclined to treat these uninspiring routine duties as a formality as well as a necessary evil invented for the tribulation of junior officers. In well-administered units, which means most of those in the regular army, this view is natural, as it needs a lynx-like eye to discover faults. But the best regulated regiments have faults, and H.R.H. was never perfunctory in his inspections. He surprised many a perfectly good 'N.C.O. in charge,' by spotting and checking a flaw in something which the responsible N.C.O. had passed as perfect. I am putting no halo on his head for that, and I am not trying to show him as one of these superconscientious persons who should be stuffed and placed in the United Services Museum as an exhibit of military perfection. But I am claim-



ing for him that, in spite of every inducement and excuse to the contrary, he was shaking down in the Grenadiers as a perfectly good and perfectly ordinary British officer who had just as much practical interest in, and keenness for, the welfare of his men in barracks as he had for their glory in the field.

He was, in fact, revelling in the delight of being an ordinary British officer at a time when many of the rest of us were toying with the idea of becoming national heroes.

In the intervals of more active duty, the Prince got busy with other non-picturesque details of his calling. There was a deuce of a lot of hard work to be done in a regiment in those days of preparation for embarkation to a theatre of war. Company offices, stores, and orderly-rooms buzzed with even greater activity than parade-grounds, training-areas, brass bands, and recruiting offices.

H.R.H. waded into this work as whole-heartedly and thoroughly as he waded into his other duties. After parades he joined his Captain and the other subalterns of his company who were available in preparing indents and requisitions for kit, clothing, equipment, ammunition, and all the paraphernalia laid down by the mobilisation regulations.

You can perhaps visualise this picture of H.R.H. The Prince of Wales, Heir Apparent to the Throne of Great Britain and Ireland and the greatest Empire the World has ever seen, slender, well-groomed, and youthful, in the 'plus-foured' khaki of the Guards, standing in a barrack-room at the foot of a man's bed checking item by item, from spare socks to tins

of dubbin, the 'laid-out' kit of a British soldier ; being as aware as the most sophisticated subaltern of the line, that the spare pair of boots displayed at the foot of the bed, soles up, as demanded by Regulation, are quite likely the property of another astute accomplice in the fine art of hoodwinking inspecting officers ; and being just as knowledgeable in the craft of detecting such unauthorised substitutions. Thomas Atkins is no respecter of persons in the matter of playing the 'old soldier' on new officers. But Thomas had to get up frightfully early in the morning to take a rise out of H.R.H.

One morning last year, as I emerged from York House after paying a call, I ran into one of my former subordinates at the War Office who was a sergeant in the Grenadiers at the time the Prince joined the regiment. Observing that I had just come out of the Prince's dwelling, he burst into reminiscence of H.R.H. as a recruit officer, and one amusing remark I recall : " There was not very much of 'im, sir, an' 'e didn't say much. But, in a manner of speakin', sir, when 'e did open 'is mouth, 'e opened it."

Second-Lieutenant he was appointed and a Second-Lieutenant he became as any other young soldier in the Army, with one star on his shoulder and a man's job in his hands. He learned what it was to march in the dust and odour of a perspiring company of British Tommies, and to come in tired by a long route march, check ammunition, and inspect rifles and feet of his platoon before he could get himself a drink, or ease the constricting tapes of his own puttees.

Through those months which followed the out-

break of war he sweated away in intensive training, taking what came to him as a junior subaltern and recruit officer, doing the same work as Second-Lieutenant Smith, and much more than Private Snooks. On the 'square' jumping about in a squad to the commands of a drill-sergeant, or rapping out words of command to a platoon; at physical drill leaping to the barking orders of an instructor; on his stomach at the firing points of the shooting-range; on the march or on night operations, laden like a Christmas-tree with the impediments of his rank and calling. Being taught, and teaching, by word and example, endurance, cheerfulness under difficulties, and all the craft and science of an infantry soldier. On one or two occasions when the second-in-command invited him to fall out of particularly strenuous exercises his reply was: "Not at any price, sir. I'll see it through like the other fellows."

And he did so, with a stamina that was astonishing in one whose physique was so frail and in such incongruous contrast with the massive forms of the guardsmen whom he led.

The period which the Prince spent as a regimental officer in the Grenadier Guards was no longer than that which he served as a midshipman on the *Hindustan*. But in its effect on his character it was infinitely more powerful. The intervening years and experiences had modified his impressionability but matured his susceptibilities. His reactions were deeper, and his imagination was fired by the flaming fact of war. The age-old traditions of the Army were at white heat, and the soul of soldiering a resolute fact.

Had he possessed the phlegmatic temperament of a turnip-headed farm-labourer or the pulse of a septuagenarian, he would have been affected. But with his disposition, kin as it was to his kindred of the sword, and with the throb of an epic struggle in the air to stimulate the ardour of his youth, and raise the spirit of his regiment to its highest peak of power, the Prince's surrender to his environment was unqualified.

These months of intensive regimental soldiering resolved the Prince's character, as no previous influence had done or could do. The change in him was swift and intense, but because of his temperamental reserve—the reserve which had come of constant repressions—it was not obvious even to his people and those who knew him intimately. Actually there was no one who did know him intimately. In his home circle he was much as usual, excepting for an increased obstinacy of purpose which manifested itself on occasions. In his regiment he was grave and somewhat reticent when nothing was happening to cause one of his attractive expansions, but little more so than any other young officer who took his job seriously and was anxious to avoid an attitude of undue self-assertion. As far as possible he endeavoured to blend himself into the neutral background, but there were qualities in him—'guts'—which, though masked, were neither obscure in effect or neutral in tint. Regimental spirit and the atmosphere of united effort conquered self-consciousness, reinforced his resolution, and brought out his individuality. They hardened him, reinforced him, and tempered him—as a fine blade is tempered.

Those months consolidated his ego ; fitted him as it were with a steel centre. Intensive military training in a fine regiment did for the Prince what it did for thousands of others at that time : upon a boyish frame and a boyish heart it superimposed a man's self-reliance, initiative, and purpose.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE WAR

UPON every man who served in the battle zones the War made an impression that no other experience in life is likely to equal. I do not refer to the physical strain or the mental tension of battle, for that had its reactions and compensations. I refer chiefly to the entirely new set of values which were created in the individual by the environments of war on a bloody and wholesale scale. Normal standards of comparison slipped from a man's mind as though they had never been. Psychologically, ambition was replaced by effort. A man ceased to work for the future. Probably there would be no future. It was the present which counted. The current day, the current hour, the men around, and the spot you were in, were the vital things. To-morrow and all the other to-morrows might be, or they might not. They must look after themselves. Money, position, dignity, poverty, debts, bank balances, abstract ideas, were on another planet. The fellow next you might have spent last autumn shooting grouse in Scotland or cracking stones in Dartmoor. It did not matter to you, and it did not matter to him. He was there, and he was a brother. He was as good as you, as bad as you, or worse than you,

according to the way he was doing his bit of the job around you. The only differences lay in badges of rank and varying degrees of responsibility, language, and endurance. If a man 'stuck it,' he was all right. If he didn't 'stick it,' he was a 'wash-out.' Effort was the gospel and effort was the measure, and the things that mattered were those which lay under one's eyes and nose. No man who was there can forget it or escape its effects on his philosophy. He may since have acquired new outlooks, or reverted to his old ones, but underneath he is the man the War made him. Upon the Prince of Wales the effect of the War was consummate. It created his present personality. Not only underneath, but through and through he is to-day as the War made him. It is well known that he did not serve in the War as a regimental officer, but as a Staff Officer. The fact that service on an active and ubiquitous staff brought an officer into a more intimate and wider touch with the intrinsic influences of war is not so commonly appreciated. Literary gentlemen who were busy with their pens in France and Fleet Street are responsible for this astigmatism. There were many war correspondents and writers in France who had a quite considerable idea of their own importance, and according to the extent of this they coloured their pictures of a Staff that was, as a rule, far too occupied with its job of war to be invariably suave and explanatory to on-lookers. A Staff Officer's concentration on his job was often interpreted as the haughty indifference of a 'brass hat.' Consequently, the Staff was often written down as unsympathetic, casual, indifferent, and largely

ornamental spectators of the War. For similar reasons, as a regimental officer in the front line, I personally was inclined to contribute to this view of the Staff. Subsequently, when I was posted to the Staff, I discovered that the facts were in reverse. My extremely local views of war, and my equally local obsessions, became dwarfed to their exact proportions. As a platoon and company commander I learned my own reactions to the strain and privation of my own shifting sectors of the front line and shared in those of my own crowd. But as a Staff Officer I learned and shared the reactions of thousands, and saw battle, death, suffering, and effort in large areas. I make this comparative digression in evidence of the fact that as a Staff Officer H.R.H. was even more vulnerable to the influences of the War than he would have been as a regimental officer.

It is, however, a matter of personal regret with the Prince that he did not serve in France as a regimental officer. It was the bitterest disappointment of his life when in 1914 his battalion was ordered to join the Expeditionary Force and he was ordered to remain behind.

To the majority of people the memory of the early days of the Great War is still vivid enough to recall the desperate eagerness with which men sought to get to the front, and to appreciate the tragedy it was to the soldier—civilian or professional—to be left behind when his unit marched off through the streets en route for embarkation. In the Grenadiers this eagerness for war was a religion: the supreme motive of the regimental spirit which the Prince had been absorbing



with every faculty. It was the culmination of every act and thought of those virile weeks of training and preparation.

To such an extent had it dominated all other considerations, that in his mind the probability or possibility of him not going to France with the regiment had dwindled to minute proportions. It seemed to him that his position as eldest son of his father was an additional argument for the front line, rather than a reason against it. It was an argument he used when he began to fight the decision that it was not in the interests of the State that he should proceed to France with his regiment. Up to that time an order to him had been an order. However much any action conflicted with his own desires, if that action was up to him as part of his job, the fact was enough. But this time he rebelled. As he was unable to reverse the decision by argument, he determined to do so by other means. It had become his code to ask for no favours as a Prince which he could not get as a private person. To be kept away from the War was, however, too much for that code or any other. He began to 'wangle' for all he was worth, and to do everything in his power as Prince of Wales to get the order rescinded. He pleaded persistently with his father, pointing out repeatedly that he had a sister and brothers, any one of whom would make a successful and popular heir in the event of his own death. In person he harried the Secretary of State for War, the G.O.C. the Brigade of Guards, and the Commander-in-Chief in France by letter and messenger: everyone whom he thought might assist him to cancel the veto or make a loophole in it.

For some time, as he remarked despairingly, his "luck was absolutely out. They seem to want to wrap me in cotton wool and get me a nursemaid." It was pointed out to him by Lord Kitchener, who was then Secretary of State for War, that permission to proceed to France was not withheld by any such tender motives, and that the danger of his getting killed was of secondary importance to the risk of him being captured. It would have been a moral score to the enemy to kill the Heir to the British Throne, but it would have been a more complicated disaster to the Allies if he had been taken prisoner by the enemy.

Finally H.R.H. wore down the opposition to the extent of gaining permission to proceed to the Staff of the Commander-in-Chief at G.H.Q. The Staff was not what he wanted. The call of the regiment was in him. But it was something. It was France.

It is unnecessary for me to give details of the Prince's experiences in France, for there was nothing phenomenal about them in an individual sense, beyond the salient fact that he saw more of the War than most men and came into contact with its physical and moral vicissitudes from every angle. For instance, I think it would be admitted that the Commander-in-Chief of the original Expeditionary Force, Field-Marshal French, had an intimate knowledge of all phases and aspects of the operations and personnel which he was actively directing: H.R.H., in the capacity of A.D.C., accompanied his Chief everywhere: was in his confidence as a personal Staff Officer, and shared his intimate touch. He went further, in fact, because he seized every opportunity of slipping away from the G.O.C.'s en-

tourage and sampling the horrific byways of the struggle. In fact, as has often been stated in countless stories, he became a source of considerable anxiety to the Commander-in-Chief, for those very reasons which had debarred him serving as a regimental officer in a front-line trench. The statement is not a picturesque exaggeration, but an actual fact. H.R.H. did not want to see things from above, he wanted to be doing something on the ground floor. Not because he deliberately sought experience, or even because of his intrinsic adventuresomeness, but because his disposition and training had glorified the great comradeship of the rank and file. To serve, suffer, work, and play shoulder to shoulder with all the other fellows had become a physical and spiritual necessity to him. More: the common level was assuming the dominant proportions of an obsession under the influence of the stark realities of war and the example of comradeship at its apex.

The perspective he gathered on the personal staff of Sir John French, and the full horror of war with which he mingled in tours of the battle areas, with their rivers of maimed and dying, should have modified his original desires somewhat and caused him to appreciate the fact that his job was not rooted in a forward trench. Instead, however, these experiences stiffened his resolution to get on to the front line with the fighting units, and at last he succeeded in getting posted to the Staff of the Guards Division.

Here he had a real hard-working job on the "Q" side, which brought him into intimate contact with the line and made him more happy. He never attained his

supreme desire of taking his place with a platoon or company in the front line and going over the top with it, but he did achieve it to the extent of seizing every available opportunity of visiting the forward trenches that faced the Boche wire. His presence there, and even at the Guards Division Headquarters, was a source of constant perturbation to the higher authorities. But though he was so frequently risking the moral disaster which would have been occasioned by his death or capture, he was at the same time inspiring a high *morale* in the troops amongst whom he mingled so casually and indiscriminately. This year, on the Royal train in South Africa, during the Prince's tour, I was talking with General Tanner, who is now Adjutant-General to the Defence Forces of the Union, and who commanded the South African Infantry Brigade at Delville Wood. He was telling me a story of an amusing incident which occurred when the Prince was dining with him and his officers behind the line. It is a story I cannot repeat here, but the salient point of Tanner's recollection was the extraordinary stimulating effect the Prince had on Tanner's troops. H.R.H. just walked about amongst them in a free and easy fashion, exchanging notes and ideas and chatting in the easy manner of a cheery regimental officer of a Colonial unit, entirely unconscious of himself or any mission, and completely unaware of the fact that he was putting new vim and freshness into a staled ardour. Tanner's comment to me was: "I don't think people have any idea what an asset that boy was over there."

If you come to think of it, his influence on the

fighting man is quite realisable and natural. In a subtle way, he stood for the things we were fighting for. He was British tradition in the flesh : authentic, undeniable, and unquestioned. A cheery human word from him or a grip of the hand was more effective than a thousand slogans or special Army Orders.

However, the reaction of troops to the Prince is only important to my theme to the extent of showing that he was becoming a real and inspiring personality to great numbers of men in conditions where false values had no place. He was establishing the foundations of his universal popularity.

The important fact in this study of H.R.H. is the extent to which his own character and personality was affected. Specifically it widened his mind, deepened his sympathies, destroyed his prejudices, banished his diffidence, and gave him ballast, poise, and a fine humanity. It did not abolish his reserve, but it changed the nature of it. The reserve of a harried ego became reserve of character, understanding, and fundamental experience. It also re-established his spontaneity. It increased his dislike of affectation and created an ardent dislike of all forms of snobbery, swank, and artificiality. It made him into the perfect 'mixer,' the man who can be 'at home' in any circumstances, at any time, with any class of the community in almost any country. He would in time have 'mixed' well in any case, but never as much or as naturally as the War made him. He would never have had the opportunity. The War gave him more friends and many more acquaintances than any Royal personage has ever collected before, so far as it is

possible to make comparisons. It must be realised that in 1914 H.R.H. was at an extremely impressionable age, and more vulnerable to outside influences than most of his contemporaries, by reason of his comparatively sheltered existence and carefully edited environments. In mind, opinions, and character he was inchoate. His second year at Oxford had only just started to develop his ideas and found his individuality. It is natural, therefore, that his plunge into the vast turmoil of war entirely altered everything for him. This result of the War is, of course, not peculiar to the Prince. The same thing happened to many of his generation. We all know men who were completely changed by a few months in France. H.R.H. was there for the duration, excepting his service on the Italian front and a short trip of inspection to Egypt and the Sudan in 1916.

When one sees much of the Prince, one discovers two other things about him which are the result of the War, and which, again, are not peculiar to him alone but mark many men who passed through those years of travail. One is a definite tinge of fatalism, a philosophic passivity which is best described by an expression one heard and used frequently in the War, gaily or disgustedly according to the mood of the moment: "Ah well! It'll all be the same a hundred years hence."

The other is a physical and mental restlessness, which is in strange contrast with his spiritual detachment. Of this latter I do not think he is aware, though it shows itself often to an analytic observer at intimate range. But of his restlessness he is as

cognisant as anyone who spends any length of time in his company. He must always be on the move, always doing something : as though he were seeking an ever-elusive fulfilment. In these specific aspects also, the effects of the War on individual psychology are not exclusive to the Prince.

In character, temperament, and outlook H.R.H. to-day is essentially as the War refounded him and thousands of others who emerged from its crucibles.

I have given no detail of the Prince's environments in those days, because there are very few people to whom that environment is not familiar by experience or narration. I have said enough to show that H.R.H. was not a privileged spectator or ornament of the 'gilded staff' legend, but a hard-working officer in intimate touch with all the crude facts of sacrifice and effort and all the influences of comradeship on a battle front. If he had spent six months with a platoon of the Grenadiers in the mud of a contested trench, and come home with one arm, he would have been a more obvious example of typical experience, and more pleased with himself. But he might easily have been a less complete participant.

At the end of the War the Prince came back to his own groove in life with much the same feelings as other men of his age. The War was over : the unbelievable had happened. He relaxed. He rejoiced with the gayest ; he was sucked into the current of a people's reaction. But for the Prince life had acquired a flatness, a curious ineffectuality. He did not find it easy to readjust his mind to the banalities of everyday life or reawaken interest in those artificial

values which had been cast aside and stamped underfoot by the primal realities of four years' war. But, like other men who had lived by material effort where mental processes were important only as they were evidenced by action, he indulged in very little introspection and showed few indications of his subconscious disquietude beyond an abnormal physical restlessness.

Sometimes in the middle of a gay post-war function, a dinner or a dance, one could see on his face a look which told much to the initiated. A clever woman of my acquaintance, who is the wife of one of our distinguished sailors and an acquaintance of the Prince, drew me aside one evening at a party at which the Prince was present in his gayest mood, and remarked, "That boy puzzles me. He's so absolutely full of life, and yet at times he has a look in his eyes that haunts me."

"What sort of a look?" I asked.

"A tragic look," she replied, "a sort of destiny look. He does happy things: he seems happy: but all the time one is conscious of the fact that he is not happy."

I suggested that there were many soldiers and sailors about London in whose faces she might perceive a similar expression if she observed them as closely as she had been observing the Prince. But she was not satisfied, and I did not expect that she would be. It is unusual to find anyone interpreting H.R.H. from an average sense angle. The most ordinary signs in him acquire an extraordinary significance. However, he did have that look at the end of the War, and he has



it still, to the discerning. But that 'look' is not the particular prerogative of H.R.H. One can see its replica in the eyes of many men to whom the War is more than a time-mark. For that matter, one can see it also in the faces of men whose responsibilities are incessant and more than a figure of speech. It is not the shadow of the future, but the mark of the past, the sign of basic experience. There is nothing morbid in it and nothing restrictive.

The Prince can jazz with the jauntiest and grin with the gayest. He is, in fact, usually the cheeriest member of any party. But though he can fling himself so completely into a dance or a jest, and invariably leads the way in gay camaraderie, one is subtly aware that his joyous inconsequence is but skin deep. Beneath are the reserves of a personality that has been built on a grave *experience*.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE FINAL PHASE

THE Prince's tours of the Empire and the world are regarded variously as the final phase of his education as Heir to the Throne ; as the assumption of his responsibilities as Prince of Wales ; and as Royal 'joy rides.' The latter view is by no means confined to gentlemen who are discontented with the present British Constitution, but is shared by people who are less maliciously disposed but equally careless in perception ; by some people who are, in fact, very loyal and extremely ardent admirers of H.R.H. and every other personage who is entitled by birth to a salute of twenty-one guns. For instance, a few months ago, when I returned from South Africa where I had accompanied the tour in a purely private capacity, I was frequently greeted with the remark, "You must have had a wonderful time," and "I suppose the Prince had the time of his life." I was somewhat flabbergasted by these comments, for I had been looking on the other side of the picture for several months, and though little more than a social participant, I was only just recovering from the strain of the trip. The Prince, I know, had found the South African tour to be the most strenuous job of his official career. It seemed to me, therefore, that though the press had always afforded every oppor-

tunity of a general appreciation of the fact that on these tours the Prince's duties occupied approximately double the hours which are laid down as a statutory day's labour for wage-earners and were infinitely more exacting, H.R.H. bulked more as the romantic centre of a succession of unique episodes, picturesque pageants, and emotional events, than as a man engaged upon a real hard job of work. I have no personal acquaintance with the Prince's earlier tours, but I have a fairly extensive knowledge of their details and effects from the inner and the outer angle, and I can say of them, as of the South African tour, that the 'joy ride' idea can be abandoned. The Prince's tours marked his assumption of the full duties of his State office as laid down by a high conception of the complete responsibilities of modern royalty, and they also provided the final phase of his education. Besides equipping him with a remarkable range of knowledge, they were the ultimate developing agency of his personality and the means of bringing that personality into actual contact with hundreds of thousands of citizens of the British Empire and a vast number of the subjects of foreign powers.

Incidentally they were also a supreme test of his individual capacity and character. And still more significantly, a test of the Throne as a practical asset of modern government. With this issue, however, I shall deal in later chapters by showing in some detail the Prince at work on his job in South Africa, where the conditions were peculiarly representative of the tours as a whole, and where the personality of the Prince had reached its full stature.



*Photo by W. W. Rouch & Co., London.]*



At the time H.R.H. commenced his tours, he was ideal material for their official objective, which was the co-ordination of a common sentiment of Empire. He was ideal, because he had those qualities of initial simplicity, directness, reliability, and adaptability, which are the gold currency of sentiment in the younger nations of the Empire, and an inspiration of respect in the most subtle-minded communities. For similar reasons he was ideal material upon which to superimpose the practical knowledge and deep comprehension of an effective Servant of State. The War had purged him of all non-essentials, and vitalised those salient principles of common responsibility and specific obligation which had formed the framework of his earlier training. He had become delocalised in mind, temperament, tastes, and outlook. He had acquired the common touch and yet retained an uncommon perspective. He began his pilgrimage as a man who knew what other men were, at their worst and at their best, and knew himself at his worst and at his best, and knew that he was such as they were. He had much to learn, but not very much to unlearn. He was, as it were, at rock bottom. In fact, expressed in a phrase, he was an ordinary British subaltern of unusual vision and no nonsense, who had been through the mill and was entrusted with a particularly senior job of work which had to be learned in the doing. I have not calculated how many miles the Prince has travelled, or how many people he has shaken by the hand, but the distances he covered and the people he met can be summed up by saying that he travelled the whole length of an Empire's history and the

breadth of its life. Wherever he went it was marshalled before him and interpreted by the men who were making it, and those who were best qualified to initiate him into its intimacies, exemplify its effort, and distil its spirit. Because he is what he is, more than because he is who he is, and because he was as the War had made him, he not only saw and heard, but he felt and he shared. Wherever he went he was not received as a Royal traveller, or as an official ambassador, but as one who belonged. He was received as THE comrade of the Great War.

In Colonies, Dependencies, Dominions, Possessions, and the Empire of India, he met, talked with, and fraternised with more people than have ever been met by any single individual of modern times. Intelligent, mixable, unassuming and attractive in person and temperament, with a vivid interest in everyone and everything, he absorbed knowledge and ideas from thousands of original sources, and from people who were not only qualified to interest and inform, but were anxious that he should be informed—*sans* 'eye-wash.'

His youth, his common experiences, his informality, and his humour, inspired confidences which probably would not have been rendered to a more sophisticated member of his house, though his rank as Prince of Wales, and the impartial traditions of his family, contributed to this frank acceptance of him. But whatever were the causes of this universal trust, there is no denying the fact that he got into touch with all kinds of problems with an intimacy which could never have been experienced by any other private or official

personage. In the distant countries of the Empire people of all colours, creeds, and convictions look upon elected representatives with suspicion and treat professional ambassadors with caution. In which they are not vastly different from more guileful communities at home.

The knowledge of men, things, and events, which was being more or less thrust upon the Prince by his environment and circumstances, was crystallised and cohered by the job that he was simultaneously carrying on—the Brotherhood of Empire. In public and in private, besides speaking upon topics of common concern to the Empire, he was listening to and speaking on matters which were of purely local interest and importance. Often the latter bulk more largely to an audience than do the former, and they possessed the additional disadvantage of being full of traps to anyone who had not an up-to-date knowledge of local questions or a most masterly diplomacy. In his formal speeches there is much that is general and much that is banal. On the other hand, the nature of them frequently demands references which are specific and highly informed. Conversation when carried on by a Prince of Wales is even more ‘trappy.’ If only to avoid pitfalls or an inference of indifference, H.R.H. had to seriously study most subjects that were important and current in the places he visited, and important to the people with whom he mixed. Had his interests been little greater than that of the ordinary globe-trotter, or his receptivity no more tenacious than that of the absent-minded average, H.R.H. could not have failed to secure on his tours



a most unusual collection of first-hand knowledge of the Empire, its peoples, problems, and predilections. I know two or three public men who are accepted authorities on Empire questions who do not possess the Prince's qualifications in their subjects. And the comparison does not reflect on the knowledge or the *bona fides* of these gentlemen. The fact is not surprising if one will only realise that the Prince is a perfectly normal individual, with an extremely good education, an alert mind, a tireless physique, and unique opportunities; and that his naval training, military experience, and four years' war had equipped him with an unerring eye for detail and an instinct for essentials.

The Prince's travels through the territories of other Powers—as for instance America and Japan—though limited in extent and consanguinity, were at the same time marked by a similar candour and spontaneity, individual and collective. Figuratively speaking, he was not only received into the State apartments as a visiting personage, but welcomed into the domestic chambers as a relative. He shared even more of the social life than he saw of official institutions. The foreign section of his tours was comparatively brief, but it was intensive. It was intensive enough to give him an acquaintance with the habits, rule, customs, and psychology of other peoples than British, which internationalised his sense of proportion and stabilised his conceptions. At the same time, to a remarkable degree it stimulated foreign interest in things British, particularly the Prince himself.

At the beginning of 1925 I received a letter from a famous American editor, in which he deplored

the fact that H.R.H. had not seen as much of the real Americans as he had of non-representative types in New York, and that he feared the Prince's idea of the American people and American life had suffered accordingly. The answer to that deduction is, I think, contained in the foregoing pages of this book. By fundamental experience and wide contact the Prince in mind and temperament has been attuned to reject the spurious and detect the genuine, and he can do this with a country's people on less material than has been provided by his restricted acquaintance with the Middle West. It is true that he spent a great portion of his last American visit on Long Island, for his visit was more private than official. He was at Long Island for the international polo matches. But he interprets America by the incidental companionship of the average Long Island habitué no more than he interprets England by the smart set of London. I have talked America with H.R.H., and I have been surprised by the acuteness of some of his observations.

The Prince's tours have not made him into an international lexicon or converted him into an encyclopædia of abstruse information, but they have equipped him with a remarkably varied knowledge of most questions of the day and most peoples of the world, especially the peoples of the Empire. They have given him an intimate insight into the basic human factor, which can be gleaned from no library, and which can be gathered very imperfectly by any perambulating specialist.

The significant effect of the tours, however, was their psychological reaction upon the Prince. They

built his personality. He met every type of man under almost every combination of circumstances and environment ; he mingled most intimately with those men in various parts of the world who are themselves vigorous personalities. It was his job to attune himself to them. To give an intelligent interpretation of his duties, it was essential that he should make this surrender : that he should be constantly adapting himself wherever he went. He was not out to preach, but to understand. He had his job to do, but the guiding principle of that job was that he should take no sides, avoid the controversial and consider the susceptibilities of everyone. A biased word or an unsympathetic gesture that passes unnoticed in a private person, and is expected of a politician, has exaggerated importance in a Prince. It induces mortification and reserve, and inspires headlines in the press. Consequently H.R.H. had always to study his man or his company, and maintain an adequate degree of plasticity. Therefore, as does any man of ordinary impressionability who mingles with his fellows on a non-aggressive basis, he was always acquiring additions to his own personality. The process was unforced, natural, and usually subconscious. But not always subconscious. In the earlier stages of his novitiate he would sometimes, as we all do, observe something in a man, a trick of speech or manner, or a philosophy which was sound and effective, and he would add it to his repertoire as he might add a new stroke to his game at polo.

Great statesmen, soldiers, sailors, business men, administrators, sportsmen, social leaders, thinkers,

and the rank and file of a hemisphere, have contributed their quota to the personality of the Prince.

Personality of a calibre which attracts and retains the vivid interest of vast numbers of people of all types and temperaments, with no other adventitious aid than an hereditary rank that is to a large extent discredited by modern political events and machinery, and is mistrusted on principle by considerable sections of civilised communities in many countries, including our own, is more than mere distinction of person. Pleasant manners and democratic ways carry even a Prince of Wales a very short way along the uneven road of universal esteem. It must have in it something that every man has got and can see reflected in his average self. It must be based upon simple qualities of bed-rock manhood as uncovered by the battlefields of the Great War. It may have knowledge. It must have understanding. But most of all it must have kin. And kinship with all is the outstanding characteristic of the Prince's personality as established and "broadcast" on his tours.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE "HUMAN" ASPECT

IT may be that this story of the making of the Prince will have produced a conception of him as a man whose solid qualities justify a similar class of appreciation to that which is accorded other men who have risen to effective position in the State from less exalted beginnings. It is an advantage in life to have a good start, but to begin in a Royal palace is a qualified privilege. On the human side it is a definite handicap, and on the achievement side it is a discount. It denies personal freedom and it limits individual initiative. A King or a Prince may function in the State, but he may not originate. In the matter of tradition, he has as much to live down as he has to live up to. He has even to prove himself as an ordinary human being. But whether I have or have not established the fact that H.R.H. on his own merits is an extremely concrete asset to Great Britain, I have, I trust, effectually eliminated any assumption that universal interest in him rests upon his position in society and the snobbery of civilised mankind.

Yet though the real Prince—as distinguished from the Prince Charming of the world's women—possesses the knowledge and qualities of a statesman and is a

vindication of the British Constitution, he has retained to a marked degree the volatility, zest, and personal simplicity of the typical British officer. I have already drawn this comparison, and every time I meet H.R.H. the resemblance strikes me more forcibly. The type of officer I have in mind is the representative one who has far greater responsibilities than is commonly known to the layman or suspected by his non-professional acquaintances, and who makes a point of never talking shop or indicating to people that his job in life is a serious one. There is something everlastingly subaltern about H.R.H. His maxim might be 'Everybody can teach me something, and I'm damn glad about it.' He is never superior and never supercilious, and always human—even when in the middle of some extremely official function. For instance, one night at a public dinner, at which he was the guest of the evening, where most of his hosts and all the speeches were of Imperial importance and dignity, and where he might very naturally have forgotten the existence of his humbler acquaintances, he paused in his processional exit through the rank and file at the lower end of the room, where I had been sharing the official hospitality and was standing to let the 'big-wigs' pass, and said: "Verney, come and dine to-morrow night and bring X along," and a few more words bearing on a social conversation of a day or two before.

Similarly, one night at an official ball in his honour, when he had disappeared from the crowded floor and distinguished retinue, I spotted him ragging in a gallery overlooking the ballroom with four small

children who were enraptured spectators of the adult magnificence below.

Despite the fact that H.R.H. is everybody's social superior, and is constantly surrounded by people of supreme distinction, he treats the most humble as if they were of special account. And I do not think there is the slightest pose in this attitude. He is a practical, temperamental humanist. Humanity in all its variations absorbs him not as an intellectual study but as a psychological necessity. The Prince to-day does not so much adapt himself to various human levels, as he surrenders his kaleidoscopic individuality to them. He fluxes to the human essentials of swiftly changing environments with almost fluid thoroughness, without in any way losing his own personality or his own reservations. I witnessed numerous examples of this during H.R.H.'s tour of South Africa, and I have related them in their significant settings in my final chapters, but an earlier incident occurs to me which, though not specially apropos of his 'adaptability,' illustrates his personal 'human-ness.'

This story concerns the wife of a famous movie star and the dejected mayor of a certain city of the United States.

This city had, I think, more personality than any on the American continent, and so I understand had the mayor. All the resources of a wealthy polyglot and picturesque population had been co-ordinated by its much respected Chief Citizen, and the entertainments arranged in honour of H.R.H. were on the lavish and regal scale which is common to the imagination and hospitality of a truly democratic community.



The Mayor was out to give 'this Wales' the 'bully' time of his tour, and damn-the-expense kind of thing. Appreciative of this municipal generosity, the Prince assented to the Mayor's suggestion that the Royal visit should be recorded in the city archives by a posed photograph of H.R.H. surrounded by Mayor and mayoral entourage. Consequently, a 'sitting' was arranged by the Mayor at municipal expense as a special event of the visit. The grouping was more or less informal, excepting that the Prince stood in the foreground by request of the Mayor.

Immediately at the back of H.R.H., in the centre of the group, posed the ladies of the Mayor's party. One of these ladies gradually manœuvred her position forward, until, when the photographer pressed his bulb, she was standing side by side with the Prince in the foreground, beaming triumphantly yet exquisitely towards the focussed camera and its operator. An interested spectator of the episode was a conscientious official of the American Secret Service, detailed by the American Government to watch over the distinguished guest during his tour in the United States.

The photographed group deployed into a pleasantly excited and thrilled disorder, and the camera-man and his assistant commenced to pack up the slide containing the precious negatives, apparently intent upon an express departure. The police official strolled up to the operator and demanded mildly: "What have you got there?"

"I guess I've got a winner—the prize picture of the States," announced the operator succinctly.

" Pass it over and let's have a look at it ! " ordered the detective, stretching out his arm.

" There's nothing to see yet," demurred the operator. " You'll see it on all the movies to-night. Be careful, Chief ! "

The ' Chief ' seized the slide firmly with a large, firm hand, but instead of fondling it with the awe which the camera-man may have anticipated, he deliberately shot out the slides, shook the plates to the floor, and stamped upon the wreckage.

" That's all that will be seen of it," he said to the horror-stricken operator.

The key to this climax was of course the lady who had shared the Prince's ' lead ' in the group, whose planetary connection with the cinema system I have indicated.

To avoid any repetition of this enterprising attempt to convert the function into a movie stunt and the Prince into a movie star, the whole incident was reported immediately to the Prince's Comptroller, and it became necessary for the Mayor to account for the lady's presence at the side of the Prince of Wales in a picture taken for the expressed purpose of recording a notable event in the history of the city.

To a somewhat indignant Royal Staff, and to his frustrated confrères who were distinctly ruffled by the abrupt destruction of this pictorial roll of fame, the Mayor explained that he had not noticed Madame ' de Cinema ' in such close proximity to the Prince, but that her presence in the group was due to the fact that she was a member of his family party, to which he had assumed there would be no objection.

The affair caused quite a little rumpus, and the Mayor not unnaturally assumed that the Prince was personally offended at what seemed an act of deliberate exploitation. At a city dance in the evening, a British naval officer, temporarily attached to H.R.H.'s Staff, was sent by the Prince to find the Mayor, who was not in evidence as he should have been. As a matter of fact, H.R.H. was annoyed by the incident, for the enquiries of the Secret Service official during the day indicated that the Mayor was by no means innocent of complicity in the affair.

However, when the Prince's extra-equerry reported the Mayor's *malaise*, H.R.H., giving the Mayor the benefit of the doubt, sought him out and restored his self-confidence (and incidentally side-tracked a threatening municipal contretemps) by presenting him with an autographed photograph.

Another story, which is more in the way of light relief than illustration, but which is in key with the subaltern aspect of the Prince, had its setting at a ball in Panama, where—on this occasion—the physique of most of the women was more prosperous than terpsichorean. After a few duty dances with partners who had important husbands, and still more important 'châssis,' H.R.H. relievedly secured a partner who was slender, graceful, and skilful, and began to enjoy himself. Fairly soon the Staff detected signs of general feminine disquiet, which gradually gathered strength and formed whispering groups like some secret revolution. As it is one of the functions of the Prince's Staff to investigate social phenomena, an Equerry sought an explanation of the oppressive

atmosphere, and his tactful enquiries culminated in a deputation of three leading members of local society charged with the duty of conveying to H.R.H.'s Staff the grave news that the lady with whom the Prince was dancing and had danced several dances was an assistant in a drug store.

The gravity with which the deputation regarded the information they imparted, and the scandalised wave of indignation which the spectacle appeared to be creating, defeated the Equerry's sense of humour, and after a little Staff 'pow-wow,' Sir Lionel Halsey, the Prince's Comptroller, decided upon intervention at the next interval.

H.R.H. smiled cheerfully when Halsey disclosed the drug store and remarked, "It must be a jolly good drug store." But when Halsey explained the general situation, he became quite annoyed at its snobbery, and though he was thinking of changing his partner for the next dance, he insisted upon dancing one more with the girl from the drug store. But he soothed the lacerated feelings of society by dancing the remainder of the evening according to the calendar of local precedence.

The more I see of H.R.H. the more I can see the typical British officer reflected in his acts, point of view, temperament, and in his attitude to the unending duties of his position as Prince of Wales.



## CHAPTER X

### AN INTIMATE SUMMARY

**I** NTEREST in the Prince is not only universal, but it is curiously intimate, domestic in fact. The popular question, "What is the Prince really like?" means, "What does he like?" or what does he like, think, and do in the personal and ordinary sense outside his official identity? It will have been gathered, I think, that H.R.H.'s job is very much a part of himself, and that unlike most of us, he has no water-tight compartment from which his official identity is excluded. On the other hand, he has his own individuality, preferences, private activities, and personal reactions which elucidate the above question, and which fill in the detail of the picture of the Prince as he is.

A common query is, "What does he think about it all?" meaning, presumably, his position as Prince of Wales and the constant limelight.

Of his position in a social sense he is only conscious in that it restricts his personal freedom, and that it inspires in many people he meets an artificiality or a lack of spontaneity which he has always to be fighting. In making new acquaintances and meeting people for the first time, he has often to work extremely hard to get them at ease and open up a natural intercourse.

He experienced this difficulty to a noticeable degree on the South African tour. I am quite sure that he never thinks to himself as many other public men do, "Well, I am Prince of Wales, and that's something." In fact, this idea in relation to himself would cause him amusement.

But of his position in the official sense, or rather in its traditional aspect, his attitude is quite different. Towards the history and traditions of Britain, the Empire, and the Crown he has a feeling of *esprit de corps* that is even stronger than that which inspires and binds an old and famous regiment. In that sense his rank is his sign of supreme and proud obligation. But like many men who carry on a great tradition, he does not talk of it or preach it; but it shows in casual words, and exhibits itself in a hundred minor ways.

Towards his future as King-Emperor he looks with definite personal diffidence and no small regret. But he accepts the prospect as he accepts the inhibitions of his present rank. It is 'the game' to him; and he has no thought of shirking its responsibilities. He lends himself with absolute loyalty, if not with enthusiasm, to his preparation for kingship. The constant limelight he hates, but he recognises its inevitability. He attributes it entirely to his position as eldest son of the King, and not at all to any quality of his own personality.

He is intensely keen upon, and vividly interested in, the serious work of his tours and in their higher object. And he is out to do the best that is in him. I do not think he realises his own effectiveness in this respect, or how much of an ambassador he is. Tempera-

mentally and mentally he is intensely interested in the practical life and constructive effort of country building, and it is his nature to make friends with people of all classes and shades of opinion. Being Prince of Wales his empire-binding object is, therefore, usually achieved in a very simple manner. I believe, however, that the South African tour has somewhat modified this unawareness, for the racial rivalries, and the secessionist views of a large section of the Dutch community, complicated his duties considerably and demonstrated to a remarkable degree the effect of his own personality as distinguished from the influence of his office. In many places he had to take infinite trouble to drag out the right people and to gain their confidence in the short time that was available. The job involved all his qualities, great patience, and no little ambassadorial skill.

Travelling is almost a craze with H.R.H., despite the fact that he has had so much of it. New sights, new people, constantly changing environments, fresh experiences, and the unrelenting movement of travel, attract him enormously. This is due very largely to that restlessness which had its origin in the War. He realises, of course, that as Prince of Wales he has unique advantages as a traveller, but he would infinitely prefer travelling as a private individual.

H.R.H.'s personal reactions towards his spectacular duties are expressed by his habit of getting through them as rapidly as permissible and reducing pomp to the practicable zero. State pageants, Court functions, full-dress ceremonials—traditions in frills—which gallop the pulse of the onlooker and fill most of the



participants with conscious pride, leave the Prince stone cold. He has no use for the splendours of his office, and never gets the vestige of a thrill out of them. His attitude is that of a business man tackling an unattractive but inevitable piece of routine work. H.R.H. particularly dislikes full-dress ceremonials, in which he takes no active part where he feels himself to be merely a dressed-up puppet. On the other hand, a regimental function like Trooping the Colour, where every participant is in deadly earnest, moves him deeply. I have also seen him intensely affected by an old battlefield, and that not of the War in which he took part. He has, in fact, a deep emotional sense which is suppressed, but which comes out on occasions of intrinsic sincerity.

In the common activities of everyday life there are only two which give him excitement: riding to hounds on a hot scent across country, and the close finish of a race in which he is well up to the post. He is exceedingly keen on horses and a remarkably good rider: straight, fearless, and a stickler. Like every other horseman who hunts regularly and goes for his fences, he takes a toss occasionally; but unlike other riders, his falls are placarded all over the country and cabled to half the globe. He is a good judge of a horse, particularly when he gets into the saddle, but he does not at present rely on his own judgment in buying horses. In this, as in most other things, he is always ready to defer to the opinion of an acknowledged expert. Considering his keenness on horses, and the fact that his chief relaxations are hunting and polo, and that he could afford to have strings of hunters

and ponies as well as find use for them, he keeps very few—no more than the average 'well-to-do' sportsman. At the moment I think he has two or three polo ponies down at Tor Royal, his Devon farm, and ten or twelve hunters at his hunting-stables.

It is common knowledge that polo is the Prince's favourite game, but the class of game he plays is not so well known. At the moment I forget his handicap, but in Indian parlance I should describe his play as an excellent 'station' game of tournament class. I have seen him play an exceedingly ordinary game, and, conversely, I have seen him play a brilliant one. His real form is much higher than his average performance, for he has a fine eye, some first-class strokes, and the team sense; but his official duties give him no opportunity of regular practice. I was discussing polo one evening with H.R.H. when he remarked: "I shall go to India again one day when I can. Wherever one is in that country one can get a game practically outside one's door without the bother of fixing it up ahead. It is just one vast polo ground, and nearly everybody plays."

Golf is a game which the Prince plays when he cannot get any hunting or polo, or as a change from both. In the last two years he has been very much bitten by it. He got more golf in Africa than he has ever had before, and his game has come on quite a lot, but like many enthusiasts in the 14-handicap class, he takes the game and his mistakes far too seriously. Anything he does he likes to do well. He does not mind in the slightest losing a match, but he hates making an ass of himself. In his opinion, it is easier

to do that at golf than at any other game. For this reason, probably combined with the fear of not giving his partner and opponents a good game, he prefers playing with people he knows, and usually with men. One of his troubles at this game is public curiosity. He likes to play on ordinary club courses, but it is seldom that he is able to do so with the comparative privacy of an ordinary club member. Before he has done a couple of holes, the links begin to fill in a most remarkable manner, and his chance of a quiet round vanishes. As I heard him remark on one occasion with an impatience which can be understood, "Wherever I go, they smell me out."

H.R.H. has not succumbed to the popular craze of tennis. He plays very rarely, and has never played much. It is too confined a game for his temperament, and from a purely exercise point of view, which is an important one with him, squash fulfils all requirements. He likes squash as a game, and plays it daily when he can; but its chief appeal is that it gives him the maximum amount of exercise in the minimum amount of time. He is one of those people to whom perfect physical fitness is a religion and a good hard sweat an absolute tonic. Exercise which does not make him sweat is no good to him, and squash is about the best game there is for the purpose. At the end of a long tiring day of public engagements with a luncheon banquet thrown in, an hour's hard squash rejuvenates him completely. In London he commences the day with it, and however late he may have been kept up on the previous night, it sets him up for the day's work.

In the Prince's inveterate desire for hard exercise,

and his special liking for games that involve much movement, there is a strong element of his temperamental restlessness. But he is influenced also to no small degree by another factor of less subtle origin—the fear of putting on weight. He has a horror of this possibility, and a remorseless determination to keep the tendency in check. For this reason he is always careful in his diet. He eats sparingly, and avoids fat-producing articles of food. He keeps a keen eye on the weighing machine and on the feel of his uniforms. I do not think his objection to weight is inspired by ordinary vanity, but by the soldier's creed of constant fitness, and hatred of physical slackness and self-indulgence.

As regards other field sports in which the average man with time and opportunity is interested, as for instance bird-shooting, I have heard various speculations on the Prince's inclinations and skill. His attitude to bird-shooting is this: "At present I am dead keen on hunting and riding generally. The day will come when I won't be able to hunt or ride as often as I would wish, and I shall then be only too glad to fall back on shooting for my form of sport." For that reason, though he likes bird-shooting, he spends such time as he has on more active pursuits. In short, he welcomes a good shoot in England, but would always give it up at present for a day's hunting.

Big-gameshooting does not appeal vastly to the Prince at present, probably because his initial experience of this form of sport was obtained in circumstances which might be described as artificial, namely, in pageant-like 'tamashas,' organised by various Indian

rajahs. These involve almost as much ceremony and trappings as a Court function, and employ as many people. Shooting a tiger from a howdah on the back of an elephant surrounded by a score of other elephants and a score of other sportsmen, provides excitement of a certain kind, but it is not by any means the same thing as a 'shikar' on foot with one other rifle and a couple of gun-bearers. The latter method is the one H.R.H. would like, but it is one that is forbidden him, for the same reason as that which constrained him to give up riding in races. By the expressed wish of Parliament, and the desire of the King, he may not practise any form of sport that is considered dangerous.

There is one other pastime in which the Prince indulged during his Indian tour that completely captured him, and that is pig-sticking. Pig-sticking is full of excitement, and contains no little element of risk. It requires steady nerves, a quick eye, an unerring hand, and a firm seat in the saddle. H.R.H. made acquaintance with this sport in Patiala and Jodhpore, loved it, and handled his spear like a workman. But as with many other things to which he was introduced on his tours, he had no time to become really proficient at pig-sticking, and consequently, although he attended the Kadir Cup, he was not qualified to compete.

This specific description of the Prince's sporting predilections is, I think, justified, not only because sport is as much an integral part of his unofficial existence as it is part of the life of the average healthy male citizen of the Empire, but because the wide interest in this aspect of H.R.H. is seldom fed by facts,

but is often misled by distorted deductions arising from the varying degree of publicity which is given to incidents of his physical activities. For instance, though he takes a toss less frequently than most hard-riding men, and despite the fact that his favourite game, polo, requires a particularly good seat, there are lots of people who are convinced that the Prince cannot take a fence without falling off his horse. Also I have frequently heard the suggestion at shooting parties that he shoots rarely because he is no good with a shot-gun. Conversely, I have seen it stated by the press that the Prince is as good a 'gun' as his father, who is one of the best shots in the country.

Similarly I have often read that the Prince is an ardent motorist. Of this claim I would say that when H.R.H. first had a car of his own he was as keen as any new owner-driver, but now his enthusiasm for motoring as a sport has been replaced by a normal appreciation of it as an essential method of transport. He possesses only two personal cars, one of which he uses for official purposes in London, and the other, an 'all-weather,' for his general requirements. I would add also that nowadays he rarely drives himself. He prefers being a passenger, though he is as alert and sophisticated as his chauffeur to the mechanical performance of his own or any other car, and could, if necessary, either make or direct ordinary running repairs or adjustments.

The physical side of the Prince's individuality in private life has the most obvious expression, and for that reason dominates the popular conception of him. But in his private life and personal tastes, as in his

official duties, there are ramifications which are superficially inapparent and seldom appreciated.

For example, it is by no means generally realised that H.R.H. has artistic tastes above the average. By this I do not mean to suggest that he is a secret 'high-brow,' but I do wish to indicate that he is no 'bone-head.' Under his intensely physical identity, there is a vivid sense of intellectual appreciation which sometimes surprises even people who know him intimately, and which seems entirely to escape public attention. The mystery which surrounds this aspect of H.R.H. is partly due to the traditional reticence of the British officer whose characteristics the Prince has so thoroughly absorbed, and partly to the fact that the more intellectual sections of the community in which he exhibits an active interest do not avidly advertise his 'patronage.' I have in mind the managerial enterprise of a certain popular revue the Prince saw in London in 1925, which advertised the visits to an extent which incited special articles alleging and deploring the fact that H.R.H.'s interest in the theatres was confined to revues and musical comedies. At that particular time H.R.H. was having a little run of theatre going, and at least half of the stage performances he attended were serious plays. I can, however, recall no one of these attendances that was notified to the general public by the managements concerned, or that received any comment in the press.

Generally speaking, it is true that the Prince prefers the lighter form of theatrical entertainment, but only because he needs the relaxation which such shows

provide. At the end of a long and tiring day of official duties he requires amusement which involves no special mental effort, in which respect he is much the same as many other extremely busy men whose days are exacting. Musical comedy audiences are not confined to the frivolous. There are quite a number of public personages, whose intellectual range the most intolerant high-brow would hesitate to impugn, who never go to a theatre except to be amused, and who deliberately select entertainments of a superficial nature, which involve no thought or concentration. It is desirable, perhaps, for people whose acquaintance with life is largely abstract to prefer drama, straight comedy, or realistic plays; but to a man like the Prince, whose practical knowledge of life, human psychology, and human endeavour extends far beyond the horizons of Hampstead or the studios of Chelsea, the necessity for witnessing stage representations of the context of existence is not so apparent or of equal appeal. His actual experiences of many countries, varied peoples, and countless individuals, in innumerable environments and all emotional atmospheres, have given him a first-hand acquaintance with the problems, phases, and facets of humanity, which effectively acquits him of any suspicion of limiting his artistic interests to the attractive jingles of a musical comedy—assuming Art is closely related to life.

Nevertheless, footlight drama and thoughtful plays interest the Prince considerably, and but for the reactions of his serious duties, and their incessant drain upon his time, it is my view that he would figure frequently in serious audiences; though at the same time he will



never surrender himself to abstract ideas of life, or even its more realistic representations, with the artistic abandon of the intelligentsia.

On the whole, I should say that his artistic taste is more latent than developed, but it comes to the surface sometimes in the shape of an informed remark or a gesture of acute appreciation which is rather remarkable in anyone but an expert. Occasionally in walking through a picture exhibition he will be peculiarly attracted by an artist's work, and linger over it with the absorbed interest of a connoisseur.

For reading he has a great appetite, but he has to make his opportunities. He devours short stories, particularly those of Kipling and Galsworthy. The novels of the latter author are a new craze with him. Erudite philosophies and belles-lettres interest him up to a point, and then he gets bored, usually because he finds such works prolix, often ambiguous, and containing more words than matter. He can appreciate fine writing, but not unless it has adequate substance, and the substance is more vital than academic. A good biography attracts him, but not if its qualities are purely literary. It must have body and event, and preferably be of an active, modern personality who has done things, or is doing them, in almost any walk of life. He has a special liking for memoirs of famous soldiers, sportsmen, sailors, and statesmen, when they describe effort and disclose the inner angles of strategy, organisation, statecraft, and personality. Popular volumes of gossip and chit-chat, such as are written by social luminaries, amuse him very little, even when they introduce people with



*Photo by C. Vandyk, Ltd., London.*  
140]



whom he is personally acquainted—principally because they are invariably tinged with malice and betray the confidences of the author's friends. H.R.H. likes a good story as much as anybody, but he loathes indiscriminate gossip. I would add that scandal, whether in the form of published recollections or in the spoken word, biases him only against its circulator. He takes people as he finds them, and if he judges them at all, he does so by life as it is and not by ideal standards.

In writing these words, I am reminded of a conversation I had with him on the subject of a certain personage whom we both know personally, who was the central figure in a celebrated case which was unfolded at the Old Bailey, in which the said personage figured somewhat ingloriously, and—by the standards of conventional hypocrisy—most reprehensibly. H.R.H.'s opinion of his distinguished acquaintance, and of the odious notoriety he incurred, was that the personage concerned was a fine fellow: and that the affair was exceedingly bad luck on him, and might have happened to anybody.

To me, the significant fact in the Prince's reading is that he does any at all. It is a simple matter for a man of some leisure to acquire and gratify literary tastes; but a man whose time is so allotted and completely bespoke as the Prince's—if there is such an individual—requires considerable artistic impulse from within to develop the preferences I have indicated.

To music the Prince's reactions are extremely ordinary, in which, again, he is no different from many other well-educated and artistic people whose training

has not been in that direction, and whose temperament or circumstance does not induce a feigned enthusiasm. He knows comparatively little about the great compositions, and is too frank and too occupied to camouflage intimacy. At the same time he is remarkably responsive to the singing of a good choir, particularly of children's voices, whether the choir is interpreting a classical theme or producing a common melody. He is affected similarly, but in a less subtle manner, by regimental marches played by a military band, the skirl of the pipes, or the beating of tattoo. Contrary to popular supposition and common report, he does not read music and plays no musical instrument, though he has fooled about with many. He has, however, a very good ear for music, picks up a refrain with unusual ease and rapidity, and can strum effectively on the ukelele. The latter is a new toy with him. Its appeal is its comparative simplicity and its peculiar adaptability to the volatile spirit of jazz.

H.R.H.'s partiality for jazz is of a similar character to his interest in revue and musical comedy. Its tuneful jingle, gay syncopation, and completely irresponsible suggestion provide him with the utmost measure of relaxation. It is in an absolute contrast with all serious emotion, and in addition has the restlessness and abundant vitality of his present temperament.

It is a platitude to say that the Prince is keen on dancing. His liking for the dance-floor is advertised probably more widely than any other of his so-called 'human' traits, an aspect of publicity which has

contributed largely to the lame view of him that is current amongst people who form their impressions on superficial evidence. The Prince has a penchant for dancing, but he has no passion for it. Intrinsically it leaves him cold. The human contiguity of the dance-floor, its utter informality and its light-hearted inconsequence, attract him intensely, quite apart from the youth that is in him. Modern dancing supplies a physical and mental demand arising out of the strain of his work and the nature of his daily life. Normally his nervous system is so constantly on the stretch, that it has become nearly a physical impossibility for him to enjoy an evening of inaction. Sitting through a stage performance, however bright or interesting, does not assuage this need. To relax fully, he must *do* something. On the extremely rare occasions when he finds himself with a free evening, he simply has to get busy with something that involves physical activity. The condition is psychological. It is the inevitable penalty of a job that has no rest or quietness, and gives no leisure for personal readjustment or introspective reflection. It is part of the handicap of his position. Herein is the correct explanation of the Prince's partiality for jazz and dancing.

In regard to music generally, literature, and the theatre, I have the idea that his tastes will develop considerably as he 'settles down' in temperament. His basic graveness of mind and clarity of thought, combined with a practised sense of discrimination, allied to his artistic inclinations, will in time make of him an appreciative and able critic of the higher

forms of emotional expression. This development will, however, never be at the expense of his interest and participation in the more material forms of human activity. He is above all a man of action. Practical essentials will always resolve his reflections and control his conceptions.

Another common question regarding the Prince as a private individual is, "What does he usually talk about?" The answer is, "Much the same things as any other man of intelligence and experience and versatile tastes, who talks spontaneously and not for the pleasure of hearing his own voice or impressing his hearers." His ordinary conversation resembles that of the average British officer who has acquired the habit of not advertising his opinions or airing his knowledge. He employs the common clichés of speech, uses naval and military expressions, indulges in badinage, humour, and inconsequence. On the other hand, when circumstances require it, he is a remarkably good conversationalist with the advantage of being really well informed in almost any subject. He can ably discuss diplomacy with a diplomatist, politics with a politician, government with a statesman, atomic energy with a scientist, engineering with an expert, wool with a sheep-breeder, industrial conditions with a labour man, crops with a farmer, education with a schoolmaster, health with a hygienist, frocks with a woman, clothes with a tailor, rule with an administrator, character with a psychologist. But, as I have indicated, in his hours of relaxation his conversation is commonplace—but for its ever-present sense of humour.

An aspect of the Prince as an individual which occasions some speculation is his reaction to the publicity of his existence, notably that he is never able to exercise the common human privilege of being alone.

I have told a story somewhere of the Prince being asked by an old friend what he would select if offered one wish ; to which he replied, " A day entirely to myself." The answer expresses his primal resentment of an artificial restriction, but it does not take into account the effect of habit. It is my opinion that if H.R.H. were to have one day absolutely alone, he would be bored stiff at the end of it. He is extremely gregarious by disposition, and he has scarcely spent a waking hour of his life without companionship. From what I know of him personally, I would say, therefore, that though he has this longing for a day of his own undiluted company, the desire is more apparent than real, and two hours' solitude would satisfy it. But what he does really enjoy above everything, is to get away with a friend—not of his entourage—for a few days' golf at a quiet spot—in France, for instance, where his privacy is comparatively undisturbed by inquisitive spectators, or by a sudden spasm of golfing enthusiasm amongst the local visitors and inhabitants. In other words, he is extremely fond of quietude, but not of solitude.

Towards public curiosity in himself—even the persistent variety—H.R.H. has grown remarkably indifferent, or rather, I should say, tolerant. He has realised that a crowd is inevitable, and he accepts its attentions as a legitimate form of public interest in a



public institution. There are occasions when the presence of an uninvited mob annoys him, despite this philosophy, but during official functions he sometimes goes out of his way to ensure that the non-privileged get a close view of him.

To the newspaper world the Prince is, of course, an incessant lure. No editor who is awake to the requirements of his readers can afford to be lethargic in respect to even the most trivial activities of a subject in which every English-speaking family has an intimate proprietary interest. To reporters and correspondents a Prince 'assignment' is a plum of plums, and consequently H.R.H. receives more persistent journalistic attention than any other living personage. I think that any newspaper man, however distinguished or humble in his profession, who has come in contact with the Prince, will agree that he is as courteous and helpful as it is possible for him to be. The personal attitude of H.R.H. is that the men who are detailed to record his doings are fulfilling a professional duty to their papers and their readers, and that they deserve every consideration. And he makes a point of seeing that they receive it. Unlike most public men, he dislikes publicity. But he does not vent that dislike upon its legitimate instruments. He is sympathetic to a degree, and treats a reporter like a man, and not like an interfering busybody. He is aware that this feeling is reciprocated. It is rare indeed that any reporter or correspondent takes undue advantage of the Prince's good nature. He has a lot of friends in the press and a lot of acquaintances, and his opinion is that they are a 'very good lot.'

As an example of press interest in the Prince and editorial enterprise, I would relate that last year a rumour arose in New York press circles that the Prince had been keeping a diary; that a member of the staff of a certain journal had obtained a promise of access to this diary, and was sailing to Europe in a certain liner for the purpose of acquiring it for publication. The rumour and the news of the booked passage reached the editorial offices of two rival publications twenty-four hours before the liner sailed. The 'hives' began to hum, and though the ship was already crowded to capacity, two berths were secured by these latter magazines, and the three rivals travelled together in the transatlantic stage of the chase for the Prince of Wales's diary. Each one of them was armed with as many letters of introduction to influential people as their powerful organisations could secure, and each one had *carte blanche* in expenditure, and each one was determined to get that diary.

But it took the best part of three months of unremitting effort, enquiry, and pertinacity to convince these plenipotentiaries and their respective employers in New York that one of their number had not secretly

succeeded in obtaining the unique document, and to accept the personal assurance of the Prince's private secretary that even if H.R.H. had a diary it would not be published during his lifetime.

I would like now to say a word on the subject of his supposed nervousness, for it is one of the widespread illusions in the popular idea of the Prince. When he was very much younger, he was, as I have recorded in an earlier chapter, diffident and retiring, and by no means at ease in some of his public State duties. They were a trying ordeal to him. This is no longer the case. For some considerable time he has been absolutely master of himself in all circumstances, and is rarely, if ever, self-conscious. He has certain mannerisms, such as fingering his tie, stroking his hair, moving his position, or toying with speech notes, which convey to the onlooker an impression of nervousness. He has also a modesty of demeanour which contributes to this interpretation. That he is in reality very much composed may be judged by the fact that I have frequently seen him help out people on the same platform by supplying a missing word, or by interpolating humorous remarks in his own official orations. An instance comes to my mind of an impressive full-dress show, where the chief event was the presentation of an order to a senior administrative official. The staff officer who was responsible for stage-managing the whole affair discovered at the psychological moment that he had forgotten or mislaid the decoration. Completely demoralised, he stammered to the Prince, "I had it in my pocket, sir—in a small

box. The box is there all right, but God knows where the decoration is."

The Personal Staff standing at the Prince's rear were appalled by this contretemps, and quite non-plussed.

"Give him the box," said H.R.H. coolly; "that'll do to go on with."

And the function was completed without a hitch.

A case of the 'missing word' variety occurred at a civic reception, where the mayor was so nervous that he kept losing the thread of his speech. Half-way through it he came to a full stop in the middle of a phrase running something like this: "Not only do we welcome your Royal Highness as representative of His Majesty the King, but we—we——" There he began a frantic search for the next page which he had displaced in his nervousness. "We—we——" he began again, trying to cover his lapse. "We welcome you for yourself," prompted the Prince in a voice that reached farther than the platform, and made the audience howl with delight. The harassed mayor, perspiring with relief, joined in the laughter, found his place, recovered his nerve, and finished his oration with enjoyment.



## CHAPTER XI

### A LONDON DAY

IT is in my mind to picture a representative day in the Prince's life in London, but the enormous variety of his duties, the scope of his engagements, and the range of his interests, personal and official, preclude anything more specific than a generalisation. A summarising simile which rushes to my mind is that his average day is a period of perpetual motion, which commences the moment he gets out of bed in the morning and continues without cessation until he retires at midnight or after.

It might not be out of place to begin with a few remarks on his 'base,' which, as everyone knows, is in that modest wing of St. James's Palace called York House, that backs on Cleveland Row and faces into Ambassadors Court. The ground-floor is occupied by an unassuming entrance-hall to which one has access through the small inoffensive glass lobby which you see sticking out into Ambassadors Court—if you look for it; an equally unimposing reception or waiting-room, that might hold half a dozen people without crowding, and contains nothing you'd remember excepting some crested notepaper in a rack on a writing-desk; two or three similar rooms for secre-

taries and equeries ; one or two domestic and clerical offices of humble dimensions and the simplest character ; and the Prince's dining-room.

The dining-room at York House is the most retiring and self-effacing of all. It adjoins the reception-room, into which casual and ordinary business callers are shown. I might almost say that the dining-room *lurks* at the side of the reception-room, for I am quite sure that of the hundreds of callers who have from time to time waited in that reception-room for a few words with a member of the Prince's Staff, few, if any, have suspected that one of its three doors masked the Prince's dining-table.

On the first-floor are the Prince's private quarters. They consist of two sitting-rooms and a bedroom and bathroom. The rooms are of normal proportions, furnished in unobtrusive taste with an eye to comfort and utility. They are much the same as those of any fairly well-to-do bachelor who has no use for ostentation and display. They contain no valuable works of art or rare adornments, fewer curios than would be seen in the quarters of a man whose travels had been limited to a Cook's tour to Cairo, and particularly no trophies. Most of the wall and mantelpiece decorations are photographs of relatives and friends in the Services. The obvious articles of furniture are writing-tables, easy chairs, a settee or two, and stands of books. The general atmosphere is one of well-ordered comfort and unaggressive efficiency. One of the sitting-rooms is used by H.R.H. as a sort of informal reception-room, in which he entertains privileged callers, such as intimate personal friends, officials of State, and dis-

tinguished public servants, when they call upon him to discuss details of his duties. His bedroom is the simplest in the house. It is a soldier's bedroom, neat and almost severe: fitted with everything that is essential to a well-groomed officer, but containing nothing that is superfluous to the requirements of a man who spends on the average no more than six of the twenty-four hours in its peaceful seclusion. Incidentally this room is about the only spot on the face of the globe where H.R.H. can be unreservedly his own man, alone with his own thoughts and reflections, free of responsibility, duty, and publicity. By way of a little light relief and domestic colour, I would inform the super-curious that H.R.H. bathes himself, dresses himself, and shaves himself, and even cuts himself when he shaves in a greater hurry than usual. In the same vein, and at the risk of shocking sartorial exquisites who model the detail of their attire on the supposed decorative finesses of the Prince, I would remark that comfort and utility are H.R.H.'s only guides in the choice of his civilian garments, and that when he creates a new fashion—as the tailors say—it is more a matter of accident than design: and certainly of convenience. I have never seen him with a super crease in his trousers or wearing a 'poured-on' coat. But I have seen him wearing clothes which would disturb the equanimity of a suburban 'knot.' He is usually well turned out in the ordinary fashion of a decently groomed, average Englishman, but never with the glossy perfection of a tailor's advertisement.

The second sitting-room in the Prince's suite is his



workroom, in which he transacts all his business and spends several hours of every day he has in London. Its chief feature is a large desk, which is invariably piled with papers, reports, typescript, official minutes, and correspondence—whilst he is working. Here again is the same note of modesty. It is obviously the room of a man who has some serious object in life, but it contains few indications that its owner's business is wide, important, strenuous, and varied, or that it is the 'private office' of the Heir to the British Throne. Many a country-house has a more imposing 'business room' for its estate management. The dominance of the desk is really the only sign of specific activity. Filing cabinets, reference books, and such-like trappings are of course kept in the clerical offices or the rooms of his Staff on the floor below. Around the walls of his Comptroller's room, for instance, are bookshelves packed with the voluminous records of his various tours bound in leather, and numerous albums of photographs. Any episode or any picture can be turned up immediately.

The Prince's Personal Staff is limited to the minimum requirements of his duties and activities. It consists of a Comptroller, a Private Secretary, an Assistant Private Secretary, a Groom-in-waiting, and three Equerries. The functions of none of these gentlemen are ornamental. On the contrary, they are exceedingly busy men, and the duty roster is in evidence until H.R.H. goes to bed. On tour they are practically never off duty. I've seen the Prince's Private Secretary working in his bedroom whilst his clothes were being laid out for dinner. And I have known him

leave a function at eleven o'clock in the evening for the purpose of returning home to work.

In London H.R.H. usually commences his day with a game of racquets, returning to York House between ten o'clock and ten-thirty. He begins work immediately. The bulk of his correspondence has by this time been distributed to the various members of his Staff, according to the subjects for which each is responsible. This daily correspondence is not only large, but is on every conceivable subject and from most parts of the world. The Prince's aid and interest is sought in matters that range from an old soldier's grievance against a compassionless Government Department to the presidency of a learned society. The claims that are made upon his interest, his time, and his services indicate that he is not only the subject of world interest, but that he is almost regarded as a general trustee and patron of humanity. Every letter that comes in to York House is answered or acknowledged usually the day it is received. Matters which can be adjusted in the routine of general procedure laid down by H.R.H. are dealt with by the secretaries, but those which are of a complicated or unusual nature, or which involve the personal aid or decision of the Prince, are taken in to him for his consideration and instructions. In addition to his miscellaneous mail, there are also despatches from State Departments in connection with his official duties, reports and enquiries respecting the upkeep and administration of his private estates at home and abroad, questions of social and official engagements, and probably the subject-matter of speeches to be digested.

With his Comptroller and Secretaries he works like a beaver until one o'clock. There is nothing superficial or dilettante in his direction of his affairs. He goes to the root of any subject that demands his attention, and not infrequently takes an active interest in minor detail. He closely examines and often amends the draft arrangements for public functions in which he is specially concerned, and takes equally expert notice of plans for provincial visits and ceremonies, though his particular interest in preparations of this character is confined to the initial stages.

The official side of the Prince's daily office work is usually bulky and weighty, particularly before and after a tour. In effect, this may be taken to embrace most of his days in London since the War, because the post-War period of this existence has been very largely devoted to tours, or occupied by their preparation and their aftermath. From the moment that the proposal of a tour is announced, the volume of work at York House commences to increase and the personal labours of H.R.H. to grow. Nominally, and in fact substantially, all arrangements are made by the State Department concerned, under the general co-ordination of the Cabinet. But in practice a large number of invitations and petitions for inclusion in the tour come in the form of personal communications to H.R.H., which, before being passed on to the Department concerned, are read and, if necessary, endorsed with the comments of H.R.H. Similarly, questions which are made through the 'usual channels' are referred to H.R.H. if they are outside the provisional programme, are feasible, but involve com-

plicated or arduous additions to the scheduled itinerary. In all the salient stages of the final programme H.R.H. is consulted and, similarly, the preliminary drafts are submitted for his consideration. There is much more than formality in submitting these matters to H.R.H. because he is the man who has to carry out the programme, and he is sometimes in a better position for deciding practicabilities of detail than are the State officials and Ministers who are responsible for the scheme. It follows, therefore, that the Prince has to put in a lot of time in the preparation of his official programme for a tour, inasmuch that once it is issued and approved it has to be carried out to the letter. H.R.H. cannot postpone or cut a public function, even the smallest, as a business man or lesser personage can postpone or cut an appointment. Inconvenience at the time of action, or overlooked disabilities, are inadmissible as reasons for varying engagements which involve elaborate local arrangements.

The formulation of the itinerary of a tour, however, is by no means the chief special demand upon the Prince's time and labour. The main addition is in the subject-matter; the preliminary study of the countries and peoples which are to be visited, and a specific survey of various general and local questions which affect these countries and peoples. This intimate contemporary information is not acquired from books, but from the intimate first-hand sources of specialistic statesmen, State papers, and qualified representatives of the countries concerned. For example, weeks before his last tour commenced H.R.H. was continually holding lengthy interviews in his sitting-

room at York House with men of note, and discussing past and current questions in the affairs of the communities through which the tour lay. He held long and frequent conversations with Ministers of the Crown whose business it was to be *au fait* with the interior intricacies of Dominion and Colonial Administration and Imperial Co-ordination. The expert knowledge of the present Colonial Secretary was communicated in person by that official of State, and the accumulated experience of this Minister's predecessors was passed on to the Prince by His Majesty the King, who probably has a more acute and intimate perspective of Imperial affairs than any other authority, having not only studied their internal history and development through the eyes of his State Departments and Ministers of every political party, but via the inner vision of men like Botha, Smuts, Milner, and other administrators, governors, and leaders of the past and present who have gone to Buckingham Palace from time to time to report their stewardship. To a correspondingly smaller degree H.R.H.'s official activities in Great Britain, which are constant, involve a similar amount of his daily and unreported labours.

In the business of estate management and administration, the Prince's participation is consistently intimate and active, but not from the point of view of many landlords whose personal activities are stimulated by a dwindling income. The Prince's interest in his tenantry is exactly similar to the interest of the British officer in his men. His sense of responsibility for the welfare of his subordinates is a habit and an instinct. To everything which affects the well-being

of tenants and personnel, H.R.H. gives personal consideration, and has done so ever since he came of age. The active management of his estates is, of course, relegated to qualified experts, and the general direction to the Duchy Officials. Even if he had no official duties to perform, the business is too big to be managed without his assistance. But however busy he may be with State affairs, he makes time to investigate personally the conditions of his tenantry, and to give attention to the requirements and necessities of individuals to whom he stands in the relationship of landlord or employer. It is a duty which he seldom relegates to others.

For instance, he will give as much serious attention to an application for a new pigsty or a new roof, or a new barn, farmer, or estate hand, as he will to an important ambassadorial duty for the Government. And apply the same quick grasp and common-sense methods. At a Duchy meeting he will delve into drainage questions, estate disputes with county councils, contributions to local institutions, with the interest and thoroughness of a conscientious country squire who has little else to occupy his mind and life.

I am able to state that a high percentage of the private income which the Prince derives from his estates, particularly town property, goes back in the form of improvements and schemes for the health and comfort of the people who dwell and work thereon. The only London property which the Prince possesses is in a poor part of the city—Kennington. H.R.H. takes especial interest in this, on account of the human disadvantages which surround life in closely populated

areas. He frequently goes down there in person, and quite informally, without notice, often on the spur of the moment, to examine conditions for himself. That these visits are of practical effect may be judged by the fact that the local Labour Party—a particularly exacting and hypercritical organisation—have placed on record the opinion that the Prince of Wales is one of the best landowners south of the Thames. Considering that labour parties are not prone to polite phraseology in regard to property owners, one can assume that the statement does not over-estimate the quality of the Duchy administration.

This aspect of the Prince's non-spectacular work is one that is seldom heard of by the general public, though it occupies an appreciable portion of his time and thought, and reflects a significant sidelight on his character.

The next item in a normal behind-the-scenes work-day of the Prince is the preparation of his public speeches. Most days at home he attends some public function, and at nearly all of them he delivers a well-informed speech. He does not compose these himself. Quite obviously, he has not time. The varied nature of the subject-matter alone would involve a vast amount of uninterrupted concentration and study. But he goes carefully through every speech he has to make, and corrects both phraseology and matter. Bearing in mind that I once saw a famous Cabinet Minister spend five hours in correcting a speech which had been prepared for him by an exceptionally able secretary, one can legitimately claim that the study and revision of

speeches may be regarded as a concrete item in the Prince's average day ; for sometimes he delivers two or three, and on tour I have known him deliver as many as twelve in one day.

It may be said, therefore, that by the time H.R.H. goes to lunch, he has normally completed what most busy men would describe as a good day's work. The remainder of the Prince's day depends entirely upon his official engagements. Sometimes these will commence with a luncheon, at which he is the guest of one of the many organisations which reflect the multifarious activities of the Empire. In the afternoon he may be received by a deputation of Boy Scouts or Comrades of the Great War, unveiling a memorial in the country, or formally visiting an institution. It is quite usual for him to motor fifty miles or so into the country to an official or semi-official ceremony, and motor back just in time for a similar show in town. In the evening, either for dinner or after, he frequently has another official engagement. On top of this come his social engagements, which, from the point of view of what is expected of the Prince of Wales, are nearly as inexorable as his official duties, for he can no more refuse the legitimate claims of a representative society function or even an exclusive one than he can neglect the demands of less ornamental circles. At the same time, I would add in passing that if any function has to be cut, it is usually the ' smart ' affair.

When his engagements permit, he will put in an hour or so of the afternoon at polo, or in the hunting season race down by car in the forenoon to a meet. A day's hunting for him often has to be snatched between



office work and other duties, though by compression of work, or by cutting out his early game of squash, he occasionally manages a longer 'day' in the hunting-field. He does this whenever it is possible, but that is by no means often. In view of the publicity which is given to the Prince as an inveterate hunting man, it may surprise many people to learn that he does not 'turn out' an average of twice a week, and that this 'twice' probably aggregates six hours. Considering his predominant passion for hunting, and that he never misses an opportunity of getting 'out,' one can appreciate the fact that I have by no means presented an exaggerated indication of the work side of a normal day in H.R.H.'s life in London.

An evening official engagement which the Prince particularly enjoys is a Regimental Dinner or Old Comrades' Reunion. In this, of course, I include similar naval functions. Here he gets down to his favourite bed-rock. At these affairs he does not feel a State Personage, but a sailor with his shipmates or a soldier with comrades: a unit in a selfless fellowship of the fighting services.

In a purely social sense H.R.H. prefers above all to collect a few friends of both sexes and make up a small informal dinner-party at a Club, for instance Hurlingham, where he can dine and dance with the unmolested freedom of a private citizen. No speeches, no receptions, no handshaking, no flunkeyism, no ceremony, no 'decorations,' and no hero-worship. Just an ordinary individual entertaining a few other ordinary individuals, in a perfectly ordinary environment.

H.R.H. is a great ambassador. He is a terrific

force in the Empire. He is the tradition and sentiment of our race. He is the object of more universal interest than has ever been attracted by any other personality of modern times.

But, above all, he is an unassuming British officer : the comrade of the Great War. A *sahib* and a man. Such a man ! And such a *sahib* !



PART II  
*H.R.H. ON TOUR*



## CHAPTER XII

### EMPIRE BINDER

**I**N South Africa's reception of the Prince of Wales there was a quality of feeling and a unanimous sincerity which demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that sentiment is as great a force in a nation as it is in an individual, and that the man who can awaken this sentiment and co-ordinate its expression is a remarkable asset to the principle he represents. It proved beyond doubt that the popularity of H.R.H. has more behind it than mere tradition, and that the personality which I have sketched in the making is one which justifies serious reflection.

As a measure of the power of sentiment, and as a test of the personality of any ambassador, South Africa is unique. Beneath the political conflicts and domestic dissensions of her people is no common ground of cohesion such as is provided by an inherited allegiance to one flag, one national tradition, and a single pride of race. On the contrary, from the beginning of South African history the people of South Africa have been divided by national rivalry, racial antagonism, religion, language, and physical conflict. These inherent animosities have been reinforced by 'colour' questions, varying systems of government, mineral exploitation, and opposed ambitions for the

country's political future. On no question affecting adherence to the British Empire and Crown have the people of South Africa ever been united in opinion or purpose. Republicanism has been fought for in the field and secession is now being urged on the political platform. No individual, and no Government, and no event, in Africa or out of Africa, has ever brought the two dominant parties—Dutch and English—into even temporary accord. If one bears these essential facts in mind, one can appreciate the formidable nature of the Prince's task in Africa, and comprehend his fulfilment of it.

As everyone knows, H.R.H.'s South African tour commenced at Cape Town, which is the spot where South Africa itself commenced. It was the scene of the initial struggles for supremacy between Dutch and English. It has since been the pivot of control, and is now the centre of administration.

Its population is representative of the whole of South Africa and reflective of all shades of opinion. Its streets and its environs have reverberated to all the great emotions which have stirred South Africans and all the struggles which have torn the country. Yet I question very much if the Cape has ever collected so much real enthusiasm as that which was aroused by the Prince of Wales. I say this in no sense of platitudinous colouring, but as a statement of fact, in that not only was almost every living soul of every colour, creed, and race gathered in the streets of Cape Town to witness the Prince's arrival, but that on every tongue and in every pair of eyes was a deep and united spirit of welcome that could have had no

source but spontaneity of the heart. I know Africa ; and I know the African people, for I have lived amongst them.

There was no 'second thought' about this greeting ; there was little crowd stimulus in it ; there were no mental reservations attached to it. Even ordinary curiosity seemed absent. It was just 'the Prince' is here. One could hear a vibrant note of deep feeling in every shout ; one could detect it in the waiting silences. Here was something which defied analysis, forbade argument, and scattered all politics to the winds.

And while this great gathering of the peoples of Africa waited ashore, to give the greetings of a great Dominion and a hundred races to the Heir of the King-Emperor, H.R.H. stood in the cockpit of a little steam launch that was chugging its way across the blue waters of Table Bay, from the low grey bulk of an anchored battleship, staring over the top of the cabin and making casual remarks to his Comptroller, Admiral Halsey, on the action of the boat, the perfect weather, and the film of silver mist which lay on the top of Table Mountain, exactly as if he were an ordinary Naval Officer, going ashore for an hour of inconsequential business or a job of routine work. I've got a photograph of this which you may see somewhere about. In this little incident of the manner of the Prince's approach to an intensely vital moment in his career, and the beginning of an experience of enormous importance to the Crown and the Empire, you have the key to his success and his personality. According to the best practices of the best people, including



Ambassadors Plenipotentiary, Cabinet Ministers, Presidents, and perambulating Politicians—not to mention other Royalty—his journey from the *Repulse* to the crowded pier should have been accompanied by a few admirals, brass bands, and an escorting flotilla. He might also have been busy rehearsing his speeches in the cabin of his launch. But being what he is, as well as who he is, he just wandered along to his great occasion as a subaltern of the line wanders along to his. At the pier-head he gathered up his sword and hopped ashore, and led the way up the stone stairs to the pier level, the centre of a pageant of Naval and Military Guards of Honour, gold-laced and plumed staffs, bare-headed Ministers and privileged sightseers. Then the emotions of this disciplined and august gathering broke loose over this clean-faced man in naval uniform. Hats went into the air, hard eyes grew humid, and a passionate wave of cheering shattered formality, sweeping along the pier to the human masses beyond the barriers, and travelling up the streets of the city like a wind-fed flame.

Paling slightly at the thrill of this welcome, but self-composed, and every inch the Prince of Wales, he moved forward with his staff to greet his cousin, Princess Alice, the Earl of Athlone (Governor-General), the Prime Minister, his old acquaintance General Smuts, and various other members of the Government, an occasional smile breaking his normal, grave, on-the-job expression. Quickly he passed on to inspect the Guards of Honour. A word here and a word there to officer or private, a quick

question about a medal, the length of a man's service, a former meeting, an item of uniform: noticing everything, missing nothing, a soldier taking over his company! A turn round on his heel: a dozen or two more hand-shakes: a few more salutes in acknowledgment of renewed bursts of cheering. And then a businesslike move to the car that was waiting to convey him up into the city. This mastery which the Prince has over himself in circumstances which are guaranteed to flurry the most hardened recipients of public adulation is one of the most remarkable features of his 'make-up.' I say 'make-up' deliberately, because his cool, unflurried awareness and effective calm is not a gift of nature but a product of will. By disposition he is highly strung, and intensely responsive to emotion, but he has had to school himself to face the necessities of a job where trifling omissions would create great disappointments and be attributed to lack of interest or Royal indifference. The margin of error which is granted by the world to every other mother's son of us is not accorded to a Prince, beloved though he may be. And no one is better aware of this peculiarly human fact than is the Prince.

I made a short and rapid cut up to the great parade ground on the flank of the ancient castle, and in front of the modern Town Hall, so that I might feel, as an onlooker and a unit of the crowd, the pulse of South Africa's greeting. It was not easy to get there, but my guide was a senior police official and my car a police car.

I have taken part in many ceremonies which had

H.R.H. and His Majesty for centre piece : I have witnessed many others. I have been on duty at a Royal Review at Aldershot when Laffan's Plain has been packed with the scarlet and gold splendour of the British Army in full dress, and the morning sun has flickered on fifty thousand gleaming bayonets and sword blades, moving as one in the Royal Salute, to the stirring music of massed bands playing God Save the King. I have been present at the thrilling pageant of the opening of Parliament, where the glory of history itself seems to come up out of the past and bear witness to the loyalty of a people and the power of the Throne. I was also present on that famous occasion when half England gathered in the London streets to welcome the return of the Army and its Commanders from the late War. But I have never seen anything so moving as this tribute to the personality of the Prince which was paid that morning on the parade ground at Cape Town. There was no pomp about it at all. There was no pageant-like setting. Even historical adornments were absent. There was nothing whatever to stir the imagination or whip the emotions but the Prince himself.

See a great sunlit square in a setting of trees of vivid green, with a background of silver-grey mountain and a canopy of turquoise sky. Let loose your imagination and pack that square with people of forty races, all religions, and every known colour ; clothe them in every kind of garment from purple sarong and veldtschöen to the latest Paris frock, and every cut of morning suit since the Victorian era. Picture a solid sea of faces of every type and char-

acter, from fair-skinned Saxon to ebony-hued Ethiopian. Put in each and every eye a gleam of tense expectancy such as might be seen in the eyes of small children about to witness the magic materialisation of an adored legend. Let every face wear the expression that marks the realisation of a long-delayed life ambition. Fill the air with the crashing peals of bells from a tall grey tower facing the square, and attune your ears to a murmuring sound like the surge of a great ocean, that is coming nearer and nearer in growing crescendo, accompanied by vast and regular gusts that your intelligence tells you to be hurrahs from the throats of legions. Then let fall a sudden silence, a breathless hush of a few seconds. And then a triumphant sigh and—'THERE HE IS.' A car draws up in front of the flickering bayonets of a Guard of Honour, and from that car steps a slim figure in the blue and gold uniform of a British naval officer, a few war ribbons on his breast, and a grave look on his face. THE PRINCE. His hand goes up to the salute as the band plays the National Anthem. A mighty cheer leaps to life, shattering even the silence of the sentinel slopes of Table Mountain two miles away. A thrill travels through that enormous motley crowd—the thrill of a lifetime, the ageless thrill of country, the throb of a nation's pride, the deeply moved spirit of a people looking upon its own personification.

I am not trying to write this kind of stuff, or to record in heroic vein the public incidents of the Prince's tour in Africa, but I cannot help describing this scene as it struck me, and according to the impression it

made upon me, an ordinary soldier-man who has had much experience of national emotion and patriotic feeling, in peace and war, in various parts of the world, and in various countries, and who is not particularly sentimental. I had a most uncomfortable sort of lump in the throat, as I watched the Prince and observed his remarkable effect on the whole crowd. Knowing him, I knew that it was his own personality that was doing this thing, more than his position as Heir to the British Throne. It is, of course, the combination of his own personality and his position that does the trick, but without that curious personal attraction of his, which is made up of his appearance of youth, his intense humanness, his spontaneity, his absolute lack of all 'swank,' the mere fact of his being Prince of Wales would not have anything like such a result. Had he stood up on that palm-decorated dais, with his chest thrown out like an election agent, indulged in any masterly oratorical gestures, or tried to make silence for his speech by holding out a deprecatory hand like a perfectly ordinary mayor, that wave of passionate enthusiasm would have suffered an after-thought. As it was, he stood quietly and modestly at the front of the platform, nearly obscured by a palm, adjusting his tie and fidgeting with the notes of his speech, as might have done any one of his humblest observers placed in a similar situation.

Then, characteristically, when the moment came for action he stepped forward from behind the palm, in realisation that every single soul in that assembly had come there to see him, as well as to greet him, and stood in full view of all. Steadily, and in the clear-

clipped accents of the British officer, he delivered his speech—no faltering, no hesitation, no dwindling of tone. There was a dead silence in that great square as he spoke, and all listened intently. Yet the words he was uttering did not matter. It was the man who was speaking that mattered. And when the voice of the crowd again shattered the air, it was the Prince they were cheering, not the sentiments that had been expressed in the formal phrases of the speech.

The band again struck up and, led by two choirs, the immense gathering lifted up its voice, right from the heart, and sang 'God Bless the Prince of Wales.'

Cocked hat under his arm, the sun glinting on his fair hair, the Prince stood motionless against the platform rail and gazed steadily down upon the upturned faces. Black, white, men, women, children: statesmen, politicians, business men, farmers, councillors, labourers, the good and bad of a mixed community, all stood bare-headed below and around him, glowing to the core with that one cohesive of loyalty, service, and comradeship which his presence had aroused and his personality had fused.

To those who are inclined to regard these tours of the Prince of Wales as a formality, or a ceremonious concession to conventional tradition, I would say: Can any elected President do a thing like this, stir to the very heart, individually and collectively, a gathering of people so politically and racially divided as this polyglot concourse on the parade ground at Cape Town? Has the man ever lived who can fuse into one bright flame of imperial fellowship, opposing

creeds, different religions, political animosities; melting obstacles, destroying feuds, breaking barriers, uniting enthusiasm, co-ordinating ideals; welding minds and hearts into one great backbone of Empire? You can call it sentimentalism if you like, but you cannot dismiss its significance. Sentiment survives where material formulæ perish.

To give an idea of what it is like to be Prince of Wales on tour, from the inside point of view, I can't do better than describe that first day in Cape Town. To begin with, the Prince did not turn into his sleeping cabin on the *Repulse* until after two a.m. He could not very well leave his shipmates, and the ship's company, without having a sort of farewell jollification. Even if he could, he wouldn't. It began with a dinner-party, and ended with an impromptu concert, of which as usual the Prince was the life and soul as well as the principal performer, instrumental and vocal. I was not in the *Repulse*, so I cannot tell much about it. But I gather that it was what might be described as a real grown-up farewell party, such as is usual amongst healthy young members of the male sex who are full of life and spirit. You can trust the Prince and the Navy for that.

A few of the fellows were looking a shade pallid when I met them the next day, but that is neither here nor there. The point is that the Prince did not 'turn in' until after two a.m., and that at seven-thirty he was busy with his Secretary and Comptroller in going through the programme of the day and dealing with the advance guard of his correspondence. After breakfast he 'vetted' about twelve speeches which he

expected to have to deliver, did some more correspondence, and received the official call of the Governor-General. Shortly before eleven o'clock he came on to the quarter-deck, where there was the usual ceremonious palaver that surrounds the formal departure of a King or Prince from a vessel of the Royal Navy, and then descended the accommodation-ladder to the waiting launch to which you have already been introduced.

At eleven o'clock to the second he landed at the pier-head as described, and proceeded to grapple with an historic function that would have used up a day's supply of energy from the nervous system of any ordinary individual. This show over, the succeeding item was half an hour's procession through the packed streets.

On the surface there seems to be no particular expenditure of labour or vital force in riding along a few miles of streets in a comfortable motor-car, but if one has ever experienced the strain of coping with the ardent enthusiasms of one's critical fellow-creatures, for even a few breathless moments, one will realise that these processions are a job of work to the man who is the centre of them, and has to be strung out on the constant *qui vive* to acknowledge every burst of applause, observe every special manifestation of welcome, look as though he missed nobody, loved everything, and thrived on demonstrations.

In the car with him was Admiral Halsey and the Prime Minister of the Union. To the latter the Prince had to talk intelligently on African affairs, whilst with the eye of a hawk he watched the effort of fifty thousand



people, most of whom were striving to catch that eye from every conceivable position up to the roofs of the buildings. At the same time, with the pauseless activity of a threshing-machine in the harvest-field, his hand was going up and down to his hat in constant acknowledgment of the cheers, shouts, waving hats, and other ebullitions of the loyalty of a frantic multitude, packed solidly behind the straining lines of police, troops, boy scouts, and hanging from every window and balcony. At one point in this progress occurred one of those unrehearsed incidents which are common to such shows, and which all add their toll to the wear and tear of the job. A couple of the horses of the mounted escort were driven out of control by paper streamers thrown at the Prince by adoring women in the crowd, and these horses endeavoured to place their fore-quarters into the Royal car and upon its occupants.

At eleven-thirty the procession reached the Grand Parade, where the Prince commenced the next item on his programme, which I have also already described, and which was a thrilling spectacle for the onlookers, but a job of hard work for H.R.H. Here he shook hands with about a couple of hundred people, most of whom expressed their appreciation of the occasion and their loyalty to the Prince, by giving him what is commonly known as a real hearty handshake, which means gripping his hand as if he were one of those comic machines which return the penny if you squeeze hard enough, and shaking his arm as if it were a town-crier's bell. He then had to listen to some long speeches, which were the noble but

heavy results of several weeks' ponderous consideration on the part of the speakers or their 'bottle-washers'; look as though he were hearing something which had never been said before, being jolly careful not to let escape that yawn from the night before, or sneeze out any of the morning's dust that might be tickling his nostrils with the malignancy of a humorous inquisitor; deliver a longish speech himself; and finally receive about fifty 'addresses' from the mayors and town clerks of as many municipalities, playing up to the pompous ones, helping out the nervous, and saying to each a few suitable words in acknowledgment; and again shaking each by the hand and being considerably shaken by the hand. I saw the Prince wince several times in this ceremony.

This function lasted about three-quarters of an hour.

The next event was another street procession, of half an hour's duration.

This was followed by a visit to a gathering of twenty thousand or more school children, massed upon the grass of the paddocks above Government House. Here H.R.H. walked up and down and through the ranks of the hysterically jubilant kiddies, saying a word here and there, to child or mistress, patting one young thing on the head and touching another little tot on the cheek, giving nearly every child in that great crowd a 'close up' of their Prince.

A lot more handshaking, and a few expert chats on schools and scholastic matters, and then another speech, and more hand-waving and saluting, and another God Save the King, and another God Bless the Prince of Wales. And all the time, at his heels,

in front of him, and all around him, a score or two of newspaper men and camera-men, buzzing around like wasps round a pot of honey. At the end of this particular show I thought the Prince was looking a little fagged, but he did not admit the fact. Again another street procession, and a few thousand more salutes and acknowledgments by H.R.H.

This procession finished at Government House, where H.R.H. changed his clothes and spent a few minutes with his Secretary. This respite lasted less than twenty minutes. At the end of that time, out again into the packed square in front of Government House, into the car, and off on another procession through the town to the City Hall, where he was due at one-thirty for a civic luncheon.

At this luncheon there were several hundred guests, representing municipal dignity and the important interests of Cape Town, most of them expecting a special word from H.R.H., and most of them getting it. Here there was another orgy of handshaking—the Prince's arm by this time being nearly nerveless—several speeches to listen to, a speech to make, bright table conversation to be initiated, and a heavy meal to be consumed. This latter item, by the way, is no effortless one, for the Prince loathes large meals, whereas the representatives of municipal hospitality are inclined to measure the appreciation of a distinguished guest by the quantity and variety of food he consumes, and are subconsciously piqued if their elaborately prepared menus are treated casually.

At this luncheon I marvelled at the Prince's vitality and his astonishing responsiveness. He was chatting

away with as much vivacity as if he had just risen from a long and refreshing night's rest, and as if he had no other interest in the world than the subjects that were being discussed, which I am sure were jolly dull, or, at any rate, not exactly inspiring.

At three o'clock there came another street procession, this time ending in a parade of ex-service men, Boy Scouts, and Girl Guides. At this the Prince had to switch his mind and direct his energies into Scout and Guide craft, and back to the battlefields of the Great War. I don't know how many times the Prince shook hands on this occasion, but I should think several hundreds, and he must have had about fifty small personal chats that sent their recipients away glowing with loyalty and hero-worship.

This affair lasted nearly an hour, the Prince being busy with hand, voice, legs, tongue, and mind the whole time, and finishing with an extempore speech that sent the whole parade into a frenzy of patriotism and pride.

Four o'clock brought an inspection of a coloured Church Lads' Brigade, where he talked coloured questions and addressed individuals for over half an hour.

This stunt closed with the usual procession, ending soon after five o'clock at Government House.

By this time those of us who had been doing nothing more active than trot along in the wake of the Prince were nearly dead-beat, and aware that nature was indicating a long drink and a longer chair. But H.R.H. had quite different ideas. "That's over for the time," he exclaimed. "Come on, let's have a game of golf."

The Prince's work was over for the time, but only for a very short time. And if he did not take exercise, he'd never get through his day's work. So you can put down his game of golf as one of the essential parts of this day's programme that I am trying to describe.

He rushed off and played a round of golf, and then rushed back to Government House, before seven o'clock, for a little office work in connection with his correspondence, his normal personal business, and the business of the tour.

At eight o'clock he took his seat at the head of the table at a dinner-party at Government House. But he had not finished with his job by a long chalk.

The end of the day's events, wherein he had to play lead at the centre of the stage, was a State Ball at Government House. The guests began to assemble at nine-fifteen, and there were something like two thousand of them. At this Ball, as was incumbent upon him, the Prince shook hands with every guest. If you have ever experienced the fatigue of shaking hands with a goodly number of people in swift succession, you will realise that H.R.H. in that one hour and a half which was occupied in 'receiving' the people who attended this State Ball, expended enough energy and nervous force to run a man through a good hard day's work. And that's a modest estimate.

But so far as the Prince's duties at this State Ball were concerned, his job did not end with the shake of the last hand. In fact, it did not end until two-thirty the following morning with the last dance. Being a State function and in honour of himself, he had to see it through to the end. I don't say that he would have

'cut' a portion of it, even if a 'cut' had been permissible, but whether he wanted to or not, and quite irrespective of any of his engagements on the morrow, it was up to him to carry on. As a matter of fact, he danced nearly every dance, and was on the floor, full of beans, till the end.

I have called this an average day in the Prince's life when he is on tour, and I think this term is exact. It would seem impossible for any man to crowd more events or work into the twenty-four hours, yet there are days when for reasons of time, and the extent of local interests, his day has fifty per cent. more of fatiguing duties crowded into it. On the other hand, some days have fewer functions. But those days have their greater quota of work that is not seen or heard of. So the day I have described may be regarded as a very fair average.

The natural question at this point is again, What does the Prince think of a day of this kind? The answer is that he thinks the same of a day's hard work as you or I do, but grouses less. It is his job to do this kind of thing. It is his job to be busy. So he just gets busy with as little fuss and as little preamble as possible. As I have said in an earlier chapter, he has got the job and the fine sense of duty of a British officer, and he does it to the maximum of his ability, and with a thoroughness which carries him well beyond the letter of his responsibilities. As I have also already indicated, he is no King in cotton wool and no plaster saint, but an ordinary human individual, and therefore he does not pat himself on the back when he gets out of bed in a morning and

announce to his Staff that he is not getting enough work and loves all these shows. He'd sooner slide into a set of flannels or a pair of polo breeches any day than he'd lace himself into a uniform, and he's certainly got more use for a hunting whip or a squash racquet than he has for all the speeches that were ever composed. As a story more or less in point, I must relate an illuminating incident which occurred just after leaving Cape Town. Two or three South African officials who were travelling on the Royal train, on duty in connection with the Prince, were invited by H.R.H. into his saloon for a chat and a drink. One of them, the Chief of Police, Colonel T—, kept rising from his chair in the swaying train each time the Prince addressed him. It was a very informal little party, and at last, when T— had risen for about the twelfth time, H.R.H., with a humorous twinkle in his eye, said: "For the Lord's sake, T—, don't keep bobbing up and down. You'll spill your drink. Make yourself comfortable."

"I'm sorry, sir," apologised T— cheerfully, "but I'm not very familiar with Court etiquette."

"Halsey! Halsey!" shouted the Prince delightedly to his Comptroller. "Come here. Oh, do come here. Here's a man who is not familiar with Court etiquette. Now," he said to T—, "you jolly well go down on your knees and thank God you are not familiar with Court etiquette."

Another story that is apropos, but had its location at a Club in London—the Bachelors', I think—concerned Tommie M—, a cavalry officer with a most immoderate lust for the Turf. Tommie had had a frightfully bad

season, and in trying to recover himself was rather badly dipped. He was sitting on the fender in the Club hall when the Prince came in, and noticed that Tommie's face was as long as the Mall on a wet morning.

"Hallo, Tommie," greeted the Prince; "what on earth's wrong with you? you're looking like a funeral!"

Tommie, feeling absolutely down and out, described the reason of his unusual despondency.

"Well, buck up," cheered the Prince, "you'll get square next season. Don't be downhearted."

"It's all very well for you to talk, sir," said Tommie lugubriously and enviously. "You've got pots of money and are Prince of Wales, and I'm broke and a washout."

Like a flash came the Prince's answer: "Tommie, I'd change places with you like a shot if I had the chance."

Reverting again to the labour aspect of the Prince's tours, I am reminded of a remark made to me by one of the Ministers of the Union Parliament, who had been chatting with the Prince a few minutes previously. "I am amazed," he said, "at the extent of His Highness's knowledge of South African affairs. He must have spent half his time on the *Repulse* in studying our questions."

This was not the case. Before this South African trip was projected, the Prince's knowledge of Africa was by no means limited or academic. A close acquaintance with Empire affairs is part of his normal equipment. And in the War, and after, he met and talked with hundreds of South Africans of all sorts. That intelligent people should assume that the Prince's



knowledge of countries—men and things—is merely a polite convention, is of course due to the prominence which is given to the purely spectacular part of his job, and to the Press thirst for his 'human note' as expressed in his games and his keenness for dancing. I must say that this attitude is a natural one in the circumstances, though it makes me tired, for I am familiar with the other side of the picture. After all, when the general public reads in the Court and Society columns of the daily papers that Professor So-and-So, Sir Thingummy Jig, Lord What's-his-name, and Mr. Who-is-it, were received by His Royal Highness at York House yesterday morning, it is inclined to visualise a few bows and handshakes and exits, and nothing else. Only when it gets to the next paragraph, which states that H.R.H. played four chukkas of polo at Ranelagh yesterday afternoon, or attended somebody's dance in the evening, does its imagination begin to function and the Prince materialise as an active figure.

So it is not really surprising that this hard-headed South African Cabinet Minister should have been astonished at discovering that the Prince of Wales possessed a statesman's knowledge of the country he was visiting, and was very much more than a gay and charming Royal figure-head.

I think I have said enough to establish the fact that the Prince's job on tour is a real out-size job of work, and to indicate the value of this job, combined with his own personality, as an asset to the Empire. I can, therefore, move on to the lighter side of his arrival in Africa and his stay in Cape Town.

I suppose the most popular photograph of the

Prince of Wales is the one which shows him with his famous smile. There are several photographs in this category, for the professional photographers in the world, as well as the amateurs, who can get anywhere near the Prince, spend all their time, patience, and ambition in trying to get a picture of him with a smile on his face. But the photograph to which I refer was one taken, I think, in Canada, when the Prince was signing the visitors' book at a country club, and one of the onlookers shouted: "Look out, Prince, you're signing the pledge!"

Naturally the Prince's face broke into this wide smile, which was captured by a very 'live' camera-man and sent to all the corners of the earth. This picture not only became the most popular one that was ever taken, and the inspiration of every person who possessed a camera, but it became THE Prince: the basis of everyone's conception of his physical appearance, and even of his disposition.

It follows, therefore, that every Tom, Dick, Harry, Rebecca, Mary, and Jane, and others of more exclusive nomenclature, who were gathered in the streets and squares of Cape Town to welcome H.R.H., expected him to come along with that identical smile. Their imaginations were embedded in that smile. Well, he had not got it on. The famous smile was absent. The explanation was, of course, a perfectly natural one. He was receiving the plaudits of a populace, not listening to a priceless and unexpected joke. He smiled, of course, occasionally, but not a picture post-card smile, and for the most part his face was rather grave, which is its normal expression.

Little shudders of disappointment eddied through the crowds in the wake of the first awe and joy of realisation that here at last was the Prince in flesh and blood.

"Do smile, sir," shouted a group of excited school-girls. And this cry was taken up in patches and followed in the wake of the procession. One could hear people say, "But where's his smile?" "I wish he'd smiled." "Poor boy, I expect he's tired." And so on. Of course, it was the women who were most disturbed by the absence of this smile. In fact, quite a lot of them were thoroughly upset about it. They felt that the Prince was bored, or ill, or otherwise fed-up. Some of them were distinctly aggrieved. But the comic climax to all this feeling of frustration came to Government House the following day, in the shape of letters addressed to the Prince, imploring him to smile during the remainder of his stay at the Cape, and thus to let South Africans see him as he really was. The Prince did smile when his Secretary showed him the letters.

That photograph has a lot to answer for!

I am sorry if I am destroying a precious illusion in stating that the Prince does not go through life wearing the smile of a musical-comedy actress posing for an advertisement of somebody's dental cream, but the illusion needs destroying. He can't always have a grin on his face. Who can?

The next item in lighter relief is really rather pathetic in a way. A fortnight before the *Repulse* was due to arrive in Table Bay, a mail-boat came into dock bringing two very charming young things who

had travelled many thousands of miles in the sole hope of dancing with the Prince. One of them was an American girl, and the other a Canadian. Both had danced with H.R.H. on his last trip to the United States, and both of them firmly intended dancing with him during his trip to South Africa. They were both jolly pretty, and they both took up residence at the same hotel. But they did not speak to each other! Upon the programme of festivities at Cape Town were two dances at which the Prince was to be present. One of them was the State Ball at Government House, and the other was the Civic Ball at the City Hall. These two attractive creatures, each in her own way, proceeded to put in quite a lot of 'Staff work' to procure invitations to one or both of these functions. But it happened that, owing to the limited capacity of Government House and the City Hall, there were a few thousands of ladies who live in the Peninsula and had claims to tickets, had not been invited, and who were also striving with all their hearts for an invitation. Money, of course, could not purchase admission, for as far as I could make out no woman or girl who had received an invitation would have sold it for anything less than a small fortune. The consequence was that neither of the travellers was nearer her heart's desire when the Prince arrived. In desperation one of them sat down and wrote a letter to the Prince and buzzed it off to the *Repulse*. I don't know whether it reached its destination or not, but I do know that its writer was not at either of these Balls.

The poetic end to this story would be that the Prince heard of this touching chase of himself, caused

invitations to be issued forthwith, and that he danced half the evening with each damsel. But as this record has nothing to do with poetry, I cannot supply such an attractive ending. It must be quite obvious to anyone who troubles to reflect on the Prince's responsibilities and position, that he could not make use of the hospitality that is being given to him, by inspiring invitations to strangers for functions which were denied to large numbers of the local community, even were he disposed to lend himself to such flattering attentions: which he certainly is not. However, it is amusing to relate that this ocean chase of the Prince did not end in the blank which it encountered at Cape Town, for one of the girls followed him up through Cape Province, and succeeded in introducing her charming self into one of the small dorp dances and in securing a dance with the Prince.

The State Ball at Government House was a great show, and as a spectacle very like similar functions in Europe, excepting that there was less pomp, fewer jewels, and not such a variety of uniforms. The building itself is a largish and rather rambling white house of the attractive Dutch style of architecture, which has housed many generations of Governors-General and been the scene of a vast number of historic shows and distinguished gatherings. One side of it is flanked by a fountained square, and the others by its own gardens, abutting on the public gardens and a fine avenue of trees. These trees, and all those in Government House grounds, were illumined by myriads of coloured lights, which made the exterior of the building and its leafy approaches into a bewitch-

ing fairy-land. On the night of the Ball these approaches were packed stiff with people of every colour from white to coal-black, watching the stream of guests arrive in the unending spate of cars, and afterwards standing for hours around the grounds to catch glimpses of the show through the distant windows, and to peep through the intervening bushes at those of the guests who wandered out to get cool on the illumined lawns. Every one, of course, hoping to be rewarded by a sight of the Prince. I spotted all this from one of the windows before the show started, and also during the evening, when I occasionally guided a partner outside to get some fresh air and to look at the crowds from the stage side of the footlights—so to speak. It was really a rather thrilling sight, this sea of silent faces—mostly black—in the blue darkness, ringing Government House like a great watchful army, gathered together to render homage to a Prince it could not see.

Inside, there was an awful squash. There were really twice as many people present as the place had room for. Dancing was in the ball-room, and in the room we called the throne-room when I was there three years ago on duty, when Prince Arthur was Governor-General. I rather missed the scarlet of the British Army, which provided so much of the colour at these entertainments before South Africa evicted British troops and commenced to run its own military side. But the blue and red mess kits of the South African Defence Force, and the blue and gold of the sailor-men from the *Repulse* and the South Africa Squadron, plus a selection of martially arrayed 'dug-

outs,' achieved quite a decent sort of substitute in the way of contrast to the 'nobs' in ordinary evening clothes. But even the comfy old black and white looks decorative when the wearers have their miniatures 'up,' and I was struck by the extraordinary number of decorations that Cape Society had produced. Nearly every man had a 'string' on his coat lapel, and quite a crowd were wearing the neck ornaments of the Senior Orders. The women seemed to outnumber the men in the proportion of about four to one, and as most of them go 'Home' once a year, and the Prince's visit had been occupying their minds for the past six months, the frocks of most of them were distinctly 'swish.'

The Prince wore ordinary evening kit, plus a few miniatures, and so did the Governor-General; so those of us who are normally under the obligation of wearing red coats on these occasions were able to appear in the garments of ordinary human beings.

As quite a lot of people are unfamiliar with the procedure at a show of this sort, it might be worth while describing what happens. Every guest is provided with two cards, one of which is the big gilt invitation which serves as a ticket of admission, and the other a small thing about the size of a woman's visiting-card. Upon this latter is written in large letters the name of the holder, which has to be shown to the A.D.C. on duty at the entrance of the reception chamber, and retained until it is handed to the Equerry who has to announce the names of the guests as they file before the Presence.

On this occasion the cards were 'vetted' at the

entrance to the long, red-carpeted corridor, at the top end of which stood the Prince, the Princess Alice, and the Earl of Athlone. The Staffs were grouped in the immediate background, excepting the equerries who were doing the announcing, and the A.D.C.s who were shepherding the procession along the corridor, and tactfully hustling the guests along to the ball-rooms after presentation. The latter job, by the way, is no sinecure, as it appears to be everybody's natural instinct after being presented to glue himself to the floor in the immediate vicinity and watch others pass through the ordeal. The marshalling job likewise was a busy one; for most of the guests were rather excited and a lot of them were flurried, and as there were two refreshment marquees abutting on the centre of the corridor, certain individuals, either through nervousness or instinct, had to be kept from straying prematurely to the bar. Even a State Ball has its comic spots.

When a State Ball has its full dose of State, nobody commences dancing until the presentations are over and Royalty takes the ball-room floor. But you will have gathered what the Prince thinks of undue formality, and, therefore, you will not be surprised to learn that on this occasion the one thing he wanted everybody to do as soon as possible was to commence dancing.

Consequently the band very soon struck up a rag-time, and with a certain amount of difficulty the Governor-General's A.D.C.s succeeded in getting people started. In the meantime, H.R.H. went on shaking hands with the never-ending procession of



guests, and in his inimitable way bringing the temperature to a more natural level by brief and frequent chats with the people he was receiving. I was near him part of the time, and most of these conversations hinged on previous meetings, or on a decoration or medal that a man was wearing. Decorations are good clues to the initiated. Sometimes the Prince would say, "I've met you before somewhere: where was it?" or, "We met at So-and-so." Nearly always he was right. But there was one instance where he was wrong, and that was with an ex-naval commander to whom he said, "Hallo, what are you doing here. Let's see: where was it we met last?" "Nowhere, sir," answered the Commander with sailorly breeziness. "We've never met before in our lives."

H.R.H. laughed heartily. "That's one against me," said he; "I could have sworn we'd met before somewhere."

It is often stated that H.R.H. has a superhuman memory. That's rubbish. Nobody has. He certainly has a remarkably good memory, and it is necessary that he should have. But it is only a human one.

The moment the presentations were over, the Prince went into the nearest ball-room and commenced dancing with as much verve and freshness as if he had never shaken a hand or done a job of work during the whole day. From his point of view it was a distinctly good show, for dowagers were not much in evidence and there was no formality during the dancing, so that he was able to dance with whom he pleased. The floors, of course, were crowded to the limit of their capacity, so it was very close work; but as most of the

dud performers were forming a frieze around the walls and in the doorways, and the dancers had manners in addition to ordinary skill, the Prince did not get mobbed or hustled.



## CHAPTER XIII

### H.R.H. AND THE DUTCH

THE history of South Africa has been a continuous epic of strife, rivalry, and feud between Boer and Briton, or, to put it more accurately, between Dutch and English. This feeling has its roots as far back as the year 1795, when the trading rivalries of the Dutch East India Company and the English East India Company resulted in a number of the latter's ships sailing into False Bay and disembarking troops who proceeded to strafe the Dutch garrison, until the latter surrendered its ownership of the Cape and the English flag flew from the flag-staff on the top of the battlements of the ancient castle. The Dutch settlers however, having done all the donkey-work of the place for the previous hundred and fifty years, proceeded to give the English occupation a very thin and unpleasant time, with the result that in eight years they succeeded in causing the English to conclude that the Cape of Good Hope was more trouble than it was worth as a calling-place on the route to India.

Three years later this decision was reversed in consequence of the English East India Company concluding that the prosperity of the Dutch East India Company was due to the latter having this Cape

station from which it could water and revictual its crews *en route* to and from India, thus reducing the excessive mortality that was such an expensive feature of the passage.

So, soon after the Battle of Trafalgar a big English Fleet sailed into Table Bay and captured the Cape for the second time, but only after inflicting terrible casualties on the Dutch, who fought with desperate bitterness for their hardly won inheritance. This time the English took root in South Africa, and there began a long series of internal struggles between them and the Dutch settlers, racial enmity growing in intensity and depth, and culminating in the two Boer wars. The last was a victory for British arms, but a triumph for Dutch diplomacy. The issue, which has become the Union of South Africa, with a Government that is practically autonomous, has achieved little towards reducing racial feeling, which has the same tenacity to-day in Africa, and the same unreasoning enthusiasm as the hereditary feud which exists between the North and South of Ireland. In fact, despite the obvious advantages to South Africa which are provided by the Imperial connection, in the way of territorial integrity and trade, the slogan of the Nationalist element—which means the majority of the electorate—is Secession. Secession is not a political war-cry. It is the expression of the accumulated resentment of two and a quarter centuries. Behind it there is a sentiment that no logic and no argument can silence. It is the sentiment of land, and home, and family, religion and speech, passed from father to son, and mother to daughter, with even greater fanaticism than

is shown by political zealots, or can be exhibited between rival factions of a divided country speaking one language and worshipping in the same churches. It is a sentiment that is vivid and alive in the dorps of South Africa amongst the farmers of Dutch descent ; it is a sentiment that is evidenced by the bi-lingual law which governs the country's educational system and insists upon English and Dutch alike being taught Afrikaans (African Dutch), though that language is a bastard tongue that has no literature and is completely useless outside the localities in which it is spoken. It is a sentiment that has kept hard-headed men of affairs in the Cape Parliament from speaking to each other for years, even in the way of parliamentary business. It is a sentiment that puts reserve into the demeanour of the average South African Dutchman when he speaks to or mingles with an Englishman, and defeats genuine fraternisation. It is a sentiment that has caused many capable men to despair of ever seeing a Union of South Africa that is as united in spirit as it is in name.

Any South African of British descent to whom one may talk, however long or short a time he may have been in the country, will say of the man who has Hollander blood in his veins : " Oh, he's a Dutchman, and you'll never get anything else out of him." Yet—and this is what I am coming to—I saw the Prince of Wales, by the mere exercise of his personality, melt away this racial feeling as if it had never been. With a smile and a word, and a grip of the hand, and by that intrinsic sincerity of his, he destroyed antagonisms that had defied time and effort.

On the fourth night of the Prince's stay in Cape Town, a dinner was given in his honour by the members and senators of the Union Houses of Assembly. The Nationalists, plus Labour, hold the majority in the South African Parliament. This party is hot for secession from the British Empire, and a few days before the Prince's arrival in Africa were up in arms against their leader and Premier for announcing that he was against secession, despite his qualification to the effect that his objection lay in the fact that secession would be economically unsound at present. It may be added that the desire of most of the Secessionists is a pro-Dutch Republic.

Yet when the Prince took his seat at this dinner, the enthusiasm he aroused was absolute. It was not only unbounded, it was unanimous. One not only heard it and saw it, but one felt it. And many of these members of South Africa's Parliament, who were so deeply moved by the presence and personality of the Heir to the British Throne, had been violently anti-British from infancy.

At the numerous functions which had preceded this banquet at the House of Assembly, the members of the Government, and nearly all the members of the two Houses, had already met and spoken with the Prince. In addition, so far as I could estimate, no detail of anything the Prince had said or done from the moment of his landing had escaped the attention of anyone. The local newspapers contained little besides extensively detailed and minute records of H.R.H.'s doings, and were in their turn augmented by special publications of a biographical nature. In fact, it appeared

to me that from the hour the *Repulse* arrived in Table Bay the population of the Cape had been engaged upon an intensive study of the Prince of Wales.

At the end of dinner, when the Prince moved about amongst his hosts, he was literally mobbed. But the climax to this amazing scene in the Union House of Assembly was provided by a Dutch Nationalist, who fought against us in the South African War, and who was a most bitter and vitriolic opponent of all things British. He thrust his way up to the side of the Prince, placed a hard brown hand upon H.R.H.'s shoulder, and announced loudly in a tone of fervent sincerity: "Prince, we want you to stop here with us, and be our first President."

I cannot for the moment recall any recorded occasion in our history where a Royal Prince has been publicly invited to be leader of a Republic within his father's dominions, and I cannot claim that this invitation was considered a practical possibility by the man who made it or those who listened, but I can vouch for the deep ring of sincerity in the storm of cheers which the idea evoked.

I can also state from personal knowledge that several twenty-five-year-old feuds between members were ended that night. A senator who is one of the oldest members of the South African Parliament remarked to me afterwards of the loyalty and singleness of sentiment which the Prince aroused: "Nothing like this has ever occurred before in the history of this House."

To realise the verity of the senator's comment, and to appreciate the significance of his demonstration in the Union House of Assembly, one has to bear



in mind that South Africans, particularly those of Dutch descent, take their politics very seriously and literally, and carry them into all their private lives and relationships. In fact, political views arise from personal causes. Political feelings are domestic in origin and social in application. They dominate all ordinary intercourse. A political enemy is a private enemy ; and, as a rule, a private enemy is a political enemy. In the practice of this primitive political thoroughness there are few half-measures, and there is precious little temporisation. South Africans generally are sentimentalists, and Dutch South Africans are sentimental extremists. But they are all sentimentalists with a reserve and with strong prejudices. The Dutchman is phlegmatic in temperament and anti-British by nature. Normally and reasonably he might be expected to have as much use for British royalty as is expected of the average Sinn Feiner.

In describing the manner in which political barriers and private animosities were dispersed by the Prince of Wales, and in pointing out the unique nature of the event, I am not asserting that the Prince has solved Africa's racial questions, or permanently destroyed those internal antagonisms which dislocate homogeneity. Neither am I suggesting that the united fealty he aroused is going to have the permanent effect of welding South Africa into a loyal unit of the British Empire. But I am claiming that the Prince has stirred imagination and sentiment towards a common ideal, as no individual, measure, or policy has done before within the memory of living South Africans or in the written history of the country.

Sentiment is at the bottom of South Africa's political passion and the root of her domestic differences; and where sentiment is concerned, what better ambassador has the Empire produced than this young man who, figuratively speaking, can make a Secessionist sing 'God Save the King,' by merely showing himself and twiddling a waistcoat button?

This tour showed me that few persons can withhold respect and admiration from a man of the highest rank in the Empire who can look one in the eye like a brother; shake one by the hand like a man; talk to the humblest like an equal; accept people at their own valuation or above it; possess knowledge without parading it; mix with all without condescension; maintain the dignity of his office without effort, and display a strong sense of humour.

One of the incidents of those first few days in Cape Town which contributed not a little to the Prince's conquest of the Nationalist members of the House of Assembly was H.R.H.'s ride around the town in a voor-trekker's wagon on the previous day. This vehicle of veld and pioneer tradition, with its team of sixteen oxen, was driven by a university student.

Apparently, the personality of H.R.H. had been the absorbing 'voluntary subject' of study at Cape Town University, and the students had been inspired to test for themselves the Prince's 'humanness' and 'sportsmanship' as expounded by countless columns of hysterical journalism on the subject. So they procured this outfit of veld transport, filled it with undergraduates skilfully made up to represent various well-known figures in African life and history, such as

Generals Smuts and Hertzog, Cecil Rhodes and President Kruger, improvised a most realistic escort of 'Boers' and leaping 'Zulus,' the latter complete with loin-skins, plumes, assagais and shields, and the former with sjamboks, and the procession proceeded to Government House. The tail was composed of all the women students, and all the men who were not functioning in a more decorative capacity. The arrival of this 'rag' cavalcade was timed to synchronise with the hour appointed for the Prince to leave Government House and proceed to a sedate University function.

I was in Government House at the moment when the procession arrived, and it was amusing to note the excited surprise and eager speculation registered by the crowds which had gathered opposite the main entrance to witness H.R.H. and suite make a formal departure in the fleet of Royal cars.

In obedience to guttural commands in the 'taal,' the horned oxen checked the impetus of the loaded wagon at the imposing portico of the Governor-General's residence. Whiskered 'Boers' rested on their rifles, and the Zulu escort danced and shouted war-cries. Before the crowd had solved the mystery the Prince and Admiral Halsey had climbed on to the wagon, and to the accompaniment of wild cheers from the students and the cracking of sjamboks, the oxen strained forward and the 'trek' had recommenced.

The incident was generally believed to be as much a surprise to the Prince as it was to the onlookers, but of course it was nothing of the kind. On the previous

evening a deputation of students had visited Government House to obtain H.R.H.'s consent to participation in this elaborate rag. I may add that the Prince was not at all enthusiastic over the proposal, and that there was a certain amount of discussion before H.R.H. decided the matter himself. His decision was due to his comprehension of undergraduate psychology, and his desire to obviate the deep disappointment which they would have suffered by a refusal.

Admiral Halsey's parting conversation with the deputation was rather amusing. "Now," said the Admiral, "have I your word that there is going to be no horseplay, and that you will remember who it is that is riding with you?"

"Certainly, sir," promised the students eagerly.

"And can you guarantee the same for the whole crowd?"

"You bet, sir," announced the leader, who was a fellow of six feet or more. "I'm the captain of the football eleven, and my team will be riding on the wagon!"

And so it happened that Cape Town witnessed the unique spectacle of the Prince of Wales driving through the streets on the humble transport of the back veld. But there were a good number of people on the line of route who remained quite unaware that the Prince was amongst that boisterous crowd of students on the ox-wagon.

This incident caught the imagination of the townspeople like a spark in gunpowder. The papers seized on it, headlined it, and built it into a national episode: 'The Democratic Prince,' 'The Prince of South

Africans,' 'The Prince enjoys a Student Rag,' and all that kind of thing.

To be quite candid, the Prince's enjoyment of this episode existed only in the imagination of the writers and in the eyes of the beholders. He is as fond of a rag as anyone, so long as the rag is reasonable to the circumstances. The middle of an ambassadorial duty is no suitable opportunity for comic relaxation, however amusing may be the intrinsic attractions of the jest. For this reason, though the Prince lent himself to the affair with perfect good grace and ease, he certainly derived no particular pleasure from the experience. It is easy to confuse the humorous with the ludicrous, and no man, however strong his sense of humour and genial his temperament, is proof against an unpleasant feeling of foolishness when figuring in a position of incongruity. I present this item of information to any body of young citizens who may be thinking of emulating the example of the students of Cape Town University, and I add to it for general assimilation the statement that though H.R.H. is remarkably human and democratic in his own personality and ways, he has a due regard for the dignity of his State office, and does not readily tolerate anything which is not in accord with an appropriate performance of that office.

However, as I have said, this incident tickled the sentiments as well as the humour of South Africa's parliamentary representatives, and stimulated the initial note of spontaneity which marked the proceedings at this historic dinner. And I am sure that if those members had known that 'high spirits' and

'humanness' had far less to do with H.R.H.'s participation in the ox-wagon incident than had his kindness of heart and his desire to avoid disappointing their enthusiastic young townsmen, none of their appreciation would have been lacking.

The appeal of the Prince's own personality on this occasion was reinforced by the statesmanlike quality of his speech, and by the obvious sincerity which marked its delivery.

One phrase in it I must quote, because it was coined by the Prince himself, and expresses the sentiment that was in the forefront of his mind on this tour, from the 'job' point of view and from his personal point of view: "If my visit to South Africa serves in any degree to add to our mutual knowledge and co-operation, I shall be content."

Later on in his speech, he uttered another sentence which, despite its formality, discloses an undoubted fact and expresses his own angle of interpretation towards the enthusiasm he arouses: "My travels have taught me that the Throne is regarded as a standing heritage of common aims and ideals, shared equally by all sections, parties, and nations within the Empire."

But the nature and value of his own personal contribution to this universal attitude towards the Throne was summed up by General Smuts: "The people of South Africa admire and respect the Prince very much. They love his simplicity, his human ways, his sincerity, and the way in which he mixes in the simplest way with his fellow citizens. And what they admire about him is that he has lived a life of duty

from his earliest days. . . . He is living a hard life in South Africa, which none of his hearers would like. And he had lived a strenuous one in the War."

I make no apology for including these brief quotations from speeches, or for dwelling at some length on the political and serious aspect of the Prince's tour, because they indicate the profound effects that are caused by his personality and his work: effects that are usually given only conventional importance by comparison with the more picturesque details of his doings. In fact, the serious value of his work as an effective factor of Empire is often dismissed as a polite conventionality. It is this lopsided general idea of the Prince which is so particularly annoying to anyone who really knows him and has seen him at work.

Cape Town and the Cape Peninsula impressed the Prince very much. He constantly commented on their unique beauty. For that reason, a few remarks on the subject may not be an unwarranted digression. Of course, to a man of his active habits and athletic tastes, facilities for games have a lot to do in his liking for places: particularly polo.

The Cape in particular, or South Africa generally, has few facilities for his favourite game, though it is well up to the mark with other games. But as there is much that is artistic in his temperament, and he is unusually responsive to the large-scale handiwork of nature, he found the place magnetically attractive. The climate whilst he was there was magnificent: rather like America in the fall or England on a perfect summer's day. The scenery is remarkable. It seems to express action on a vast scale. The famous Table



*From a private photograph.]*  
205]





Mountain dominates the whole Cape Peninsula and the great bay which joins the Atlantic and the Indian Oceans. This mountain backs the city like a colossal wall. It is under four thousand feet in height, but its mighty bulk, vertical face, and immense lateral width give it a titanic massivity that is profoundly impressive. Its top, as seen from Cape Town or the Bay, is a mile long, and appears a dead flat line trimmed and levelled by giant hands. On three sides of it, linked by jagged necks of brown and grey rock and pine-clad cols, stand two sentinel peaks, one like a massive spire and the other like a couchant lion, silver-grey and mysterious as the Sphinx; the whole group based in dark-green pine forests, through which whisper the land and sea breezes of the 'winter' or howls the dust-laden 'South-Easter' of the summer. The city lies on the sea-washed plain at the mountain's feet, its suburbs straggling up the slopes of its plinth. Inland this plain billows up, green and rich, to the girth of the mountain, whilst parallel to the sea it straggles out in golden sand-flats and blue 'vleis' to the amber and purple ramparts of the Karoo.

The Prince climbed Table Mountain one morning before breakfast, by way of a little necessary exercise. It is a stiff climb of a couple of hours' hard going, and there are various routes: some extremely difficult and others comparatively simple. The land and sea views from the mountain-top are wonderful. I should have liked H.R.H. to have made this ascent from the back of Groote Schuur, the residence built by Rhodes close up to the walls of this massive block of mountain, through a primeval forest of twisting, leafless

trees that are the same now as when the world was young, where the primitive bushmen used to take shelter when the Bird God of the Big Mountain came out of his eyrie and made the Big Winds by the flapping of his wings. In the uncanny silence of this prehistoric forest I met a native whose ancestors had wandered these slopes in search of succulent roots and game for their poisoned arrows. And as the rays of the rising sun illumined his yellow-brown features and receding chin, and the morning breeze stirred his tattered European garments, I was reminded of another legend of the Cape aboriginals in explanation of the rising of that sun. It is in the form of an invocation to the children, and runs: "O Children, Ye must wait for the Sun, that the Sun may lie down to sleep. When we are cold, Ye shall gently approach to wake him up. Take hold of him, all Ye together, and throw him up into the Sky. The Sun, lying down, lifted on his Elbow, his Arm-pit shining: and the children lifted him, and threw him up into the Sky."

Another delightful story inspired by Table Mountain, that was current amongst the natives when Cape Town was in birth, and before the indigenous inhabitants became absorbed by Cape brandy, Kaffir beer, education, and mixture with negroes, Javanese, Indians, and what-not, is the 'Story of the Girl who made the Stars.' Apparently this aboriginal flapper sat on the top of the mountain one evening, warming herself before a wood fire in supplement of an attire of stained earth and such-like forerunners of modern cosmetics and décolletage. And having no one with her, she decided to have a little light on the subject.

So she raked out some of the glowing wood-ashes and flung them up to the sky—and thus made the Milky Way.

There is another place in the Cape that I would have liked the Prince to have visited, but that time forbade, and that is the castle which flanked the scene of the municipal reception on the parade ground. It would have interested him, not only as the permanent Headquarters of the British Army in Africa from the time England took possession until we 'handed over' three years ago, but as the oldest building in Africa and the pivot of the country's earlier history.

It was built by the Dutch, who commenced its erection in 1666. They did not get really busy with it until 1677, when the labours of the whole community were enlisted or pressed into its construction. It is, of course, of Dutch architecture, and is built like a fort, complete with bastions, towers, barracks, dungeons, massive high walls, and a great central courtyard, upon which abut the administrative offices and the residence of the old-time governors. The stone of which it is constructed was hewn from the walls of the Table Mountain. And the whole building is as sound to-day as it was when it was first erected. The great moat which surrounds it is the same as it ever was. From the walls one can see all over the Bay and dominate the plain up to the mountain slopes. It is Africa's one link with her original history. It is also a link with the Prince, in that its walls have often echoed to great cheers of loyalty to his Royal ancestors, and its council chamber has reverberated to abuse of former Kings of England.

Cape Town itself is modern, well-dressed, bang up-to-date in every way, and has the air of a well-kept European city inhabited by people whose temperament is leisurely, self-contained, and not too much engrossed with business and indoor occupations.

Another feature of Cape Town which struck the Prince particularly, and rather surprised him, was its big section of native population which is foreign to South Africa. One morning he passed in procession through the district in which they live, and the picture witnessed was in a way remarkable, in that it was so incongruous. So far as the crowds were concerned, one might have been passing through a native bazaar in the East.

There were Malays from Singapore ; Mohammedans, Hindoos, and Parsees from the ports and plains of India ; a sprinkling of Afghans ; Italians, Greeks, Chinese, Portuguese, and all that flotsam and jetsam of human junk that floats up from the corners of the earth to countries where the sun is warm, life is secure, and there is room for the small trader.

Apart from being distinctly smelly, it was a fascinating conglomeration, and absolutely stiff with enthusiasm for the Prince. All the little kids, of every colour but white, and nearly every shape, were lined up in front of their elders at the pavement edges, waving Union Jacks and screaming out their greetings as the Royal cars crawled gently past at about three miles an hour.

There seemed to be about two miles of people. At one place there was a whole crowd of these coloured kiddies, of about fifty different nationalities and

breeds, lustily singing 'God Bless the Prince of Wales,' in as many different accents, their eyeballs rolling or squinting according to which part of the compass designed their features.

I am now getting rather fed-up with chattering about Cape Town, but I must not leave the subject without mentioning the race-meeting that was organised for the Prince, because it was an interlude that H.R.H. enjoyed extremely; was typical of a fashionable South African meeting; and because the Prince dropped a couple of 'ponies' on one of the favourites which he decided would win, after a careful inspection of the starters in the paddock. Kenilworth race-course is eight miles from Cape Town, and rather like Ascot: a pleasant spot surrounded by green trees, grassy rides, beflowered villas, and possessing all the features of a 'society' course in the shape of grand-stands, enclosures, club-quarters, luncheon-rooms and tea-lawns. As this meeting was on the Prince's official programme, the course was packed and the members' enclosure was almost solid with people.

There was no kind of ceremony so far as the Prince was concerned, barring the playing of the 'King' when he rolled up, but the sensation of having the Prince of Wales on the course was rather too much for a crowd so unused to such an experience, and quite a lot of people forgot about the racing. One bunch of adoring females spent the whole time hanging over the rail of the gallery above the Governor-General's box, their eyes fixed in a glazed stare of rapture at the Prince. And quite a crowd of the same sex—not to

mention a number of my own sex—were busy in a similar manner below the box. There must have been an awful lot of stiff necks in the Cape that evening. H.R.H., of course, interfered seriously with the neck devotions of those worshippers who had dug themselves into permanent positions of observation, for he kept dodging away down to the paddock to inspect the horses, and wandered about like any ordinary sportsman who was taking an intelligent interest in the racing. Once when the attentions of the crowd got a trifle oppressive on one of his journeys from the paddock, he side-stepped and dodged to H.E.'s box by the back entrance. Besides watching the racing and looking at the horses, he chatted in his customary informal fashion with stewards, Jockey Club officials, owners, and jockeys: making his usual personal conquests by his sheer unaffectedness and by his knowledge of their subjects. Apropos of this last remark, I met in the paddock Mrs. Tanner, Chief Girl Guide and wife of the Peninsular Military Commander, and said jokingly, "Well, Mrs. Tanner, have you got over your stage fright of the Prince yet?"

"Oh!" she cried, "did I seem nervous yesterday when he was talking to me? What made me nervous was that he knew more about Girl Guides than I did, and I was afraid he would ask me some question that I could not answer."

I have said rather a lot about the Cape part of the tour, but that because it was the most important and bulked rather largely with the Prince and the rest of Africa. It was his introduction to South Africa, and South Africa's introduction to him. For that reason,

it struck the note of the whole trip. In addition, Cape Town is one of the three big social centres of Africa, as well as its parliamentary headquarters. And it is the place where the Dominion was born.

It may not be out of place to make a few remarks on the Royal train, which was built specially by the Union of South Africa for the Prince's tour, and in which he lived for several months. All I can say about it so far as the inside is concerned, which is the side that interested me, is that it was new, roomy, and comfortable: but not specially more so than the old 'bus' which conveyed my old chief and self—plus a few other Staff officers—on our farewell tour of Africa in 1921. There was very much more of it of course, for the Prince's party was much bigger. But there was no rajah-like luxury about it, no frills, and none of the extravagant adornments which you find, shall we say? on the suites de luxe of an Atlantic liner. In fact, I understand it is to be used ultimately as the official transport of the Governor-General, in replacement of the old one that has been rattling itself to pieces for a number of years. I did not count the *number of coaches on the Prince's train*, but I think there were about six. The Prince had rather a nice dining-saloon which accommodated ten people, a sitting-room, an office, and a sleeping compartment containing a brass cot-bed, a wardrobe and that kind of thing; also, of course, a private bathroom—all quite simple in character. There were five similar sleeping compartments for the Prince's Personal Staff, which consisted of his Comptroller and Treasurer, Private Secretary, three Equerries, and a Medical Officer.



On other coaches there was accommodation, including another dining-saloon, for the various Union Government Representatives in attendance—usually numbering about six.

Further, there were quarters for detectives, valets, clerks, and train-servants. And last but not least, the kitchen coach and stores compartments. The whole connected by a communicating corridor.

The striking feature of the train was its exterior, which was painted white, and had the Royal Arms and the Arms of the Union emblazoned in vivid colours on each coach and on the front of the engine.

The second train, designated the pilot train, was precisely the same as the Prince's train outside, but inside the accommodation was the same as on the average long-distance passenger train. A few days after leaving Cape Town this train was christened the cow train, because a feature of its activity at a halt was the 'decanting' of the two cows which provided the milk supply of the trains. Besides cows, it carried the Union Police and Military representatives, the press and camera-men, a post-office, the Prince's six cars and chauffeurs, and was also used as an overflow for privileged people who could not be accommodated on the Prince's train.

## CHAPTER XIV

### THROUGH THE DORPS

**J**UST before the Prince of Wales left London to proceed on his South African tour, he gave an audience at York House to a distinguished South African professor.

The conversation was chiefly upon the psychology of South Africa. In referring to social development, the professor remarked that as the country was actually in the making, art and literature, as known in other countries, were more or less embryonic, and that a road or a bridge was of more importance to the country's progress than a picture gallery or a school of writers. The Prince agreed, not because he is a Philistine in the Arts, but because there is no cant in his composition, and he has the sense to see that the physical requirements of a young country are its primary consideration. Also, men who do material work interest him far more than men who portray ideals.

The professor was inclined to be apologetic in his remarks on the artistic shortcomings of South Africa, and to regret that the country had not a bunch of indigenous 'masters' of paint and prose to flourish at its Royal guest. H.R.H. dissolved this æsthetic attitude by stating with some emphasis: "That's

just what appeals to me about Africa. The people I admire are those who go out into the wilderness and the remote places, and transform them into fields of corn and make everything out of nothing."

"You will meet lots of them, your Highness," assured the professor, "and——"

"That's exactly what I want to do," said the Prince. "They are the people I want to meet: so, for goodness' sake, when I get there, see that I do meet them."

I don't know if the word 'dorp' is contained in the dictionary, but it is an 'Afrikaans' word used to describe any small clusters of dwellings that the wildest stretch of veld imagination cannot call a town. South Africa is full of dorps. They are strung together by the railway, at intervals of anything from a few miles to fifty miles; and for the greater part consist of a shed or a signboard which is called a railway-station, a store, a few houses, a few shacks—and a mayor: standing gaunt and lonely in the middle of the brown and gold veld, in evidence of the fact that somewhere in the rock-strewn distance are farms, cattle kraals, ranches, and human beings. Where the veld is fertile and carries feed for more than one sheep to four acres, and one can see farms dotted about a distance that has green on its yellow-brown backing, this dorp will run to a church and a primitive hotel, a main street and a population of a couple of hundred. Then it has a town-hall as well as a mayor. In this case the mayor will call it a town, though his townspeople, who have no municipal dignity to sustain and are probably fed-up to the back teeth with living there, will still call it a dorp. On the other hand, other

citizens who are not fed-up, as well as those who are fed-up, will adhere to the designation of dorp as a term of endearment. Whatever this citizen's age, he was probably born in the dorp, and either he or his father made it by physical toil and effort on the surrounding sun-baked veld. The Dutchman of the back veld may speak of his mother with indifference, and his wife with dolour, but his eye lights up affectionately when he talks of his dorp.

As it was the wish of H.R.H. to make the personal acquaintance of as many South Africans as possible, and to meet them in their indigenous settings, and this desire received the active support of the South African Government, the tour was planned to include as many dorps as possible.

Before getting on the train and commencing the dorp 'crawl,' there was a little matter of a motor tour through that part of Cape Province which supplies most of the Cape wines and most of the pro-Dutch Republican spirit of Africa. For these reasons, more than for the beauty of its smiling valleys, the Prince was specially interested in the opening section of the tour. He was intrigued by the history of the variegated but masterly personality of the Dutchman who made the district. This gentleman of the hoary but active past, besides introducing agriculture, invented that attitude of independence which is known as the colonial spirit.

The little Cape settlement of the Dutch East India Company had a very thin time originally with the Hottentots and Bushmen, who stole back their own cattle and made a practice of converting into pin-

cushions of poisoned arrows resentful Dutchmen who were venturesome enough to wander up into the surrounding mountains in search of readjustment.

By way of ensuring a regular supply of meat to the Company's ships, the Dutch Government decided to breed cattle in the Cape, instead of relying on natives who had their own ideas on the subject of property rights. So out from Amsterdam came one Simon van der Stel, with the rank of Commander, the ways of a Nero, and the habits of a modern business man. Simon 'induced' eight lusty burghers to establish farms in the valleys beyond the seaboard, and to grow corn and raise live stock in the face of raiding natives and marauding wild beasts. It was not a popular sort of job, and Simon had a very small garrison to draw on. Consequently, though he considered that a Dutchman was the only living thing that was any good in Africa or in Europe, he imported some Huguenots whom the Dutch did not want in Holland, and proceeded to lay the foundations of an agricultural settlement. After establishing this to the satisfaction of the authorities in Holland, he decided to display a little initiative in his own interests. He started big farms for his brothers—nominally. As it was his function to decide what prices his Company should pay for produce, and who should supply that produce, most of the Company's money began to trickle into Simon's private account, via the family farms.

In time the settlers became tired of watching their legitimate rewards gravitate to Simon's purse. So they secretly prepared and forwarded to the Nether-

lands Government a memorial of grievance against their commercially inspired commander. Simon heard about this, and after putting in a little intelligence staff-work, decided to 'larn 'em' a thing or two in the rightful ways of authority. He prepared another memorial, which absolutely contradicted the first one, by setting down that Simon van der Stel was the colony's father and mother, and the breath of its kindly and communal existence. With the assistance of a small, well-armed party of vote-getters, he passed around his constituency, and made each burgher sign this document of complete satisfaction with Simon. To counter any furtive reaction against this masterly move, Simon arrested the ring-leaders of memorial No. 1 and gave them the hospitality of the Company's jail for a couple of years, whilst he went on planting vines, raising crops and cattle at the Company's expense, and selling the results to the Company's ships and the community at his own price, for the benefit of himself and his heirs.

But whilst the seventeenth-century administrator was introducing the principles of high finance and creating an agricultural industry, he was also establishing the religion of South Africa for the Dutchman, and creating a Mecca for its future adherents. The 'devil' in this religion was the Englishman. In those days monarchs got blamed for everything, so the Dutchman's chief devil was the occupant of the English Throne. Even as late as the South African War, this district of Stellenbosch was violently anti-British. It is still the very heart of Dutch South Africa: the citadel of the Afrikaander spirit. Yet

this unassuming young man who is Heir to the British Throne aroused in this hotbed of Dutch Republicanism as much loyal enthusiasm as if he had been passing through an ancient part of feudal England, steeped to the neck in the unswerving traditions of a thousand years of loyalty to the English Royal House.

It was immensely thrilling to one who knows the history of this part of the country and the psychology of its inhabitants, to witness the unbounded enthusiasm and loyalty which the Prince aroused. In these valleys and hills of the fruit country, one seemed to be touching the real spirit of the Prince's influence. There was an informality about the receptions, apart from the inevitable mayoral groups in the towns, which left no room for conventional hypocrisy and empty rhetoric. This note of frankness reached the public platforms. In fact, at Stellenbosch University a young Dutch student made a speech of welcome which was informal enough to bring a wide grin of real enjoyment to the Prince's face.

The young Dutchman opened by stating that the Prince was a man whom the efforts of the entire civilised world had been unable to spoil, and added that "most of our national heroes have spent some time of their lives in jail for political offences, or in hospital getting over injuries in the football field," and that the Prince might achieve undying celebrity in South Africa by occupying one of them. H.R.H. remarked afterwards, "A jail is about the only thing I haven't tried."

This is the kind of speech the Prince likes, because it gets beneath the self-consciousness of the average Royal reception and makes a formal function into a

human gathering. His own official speeches have to be conventional and carefully edited by virtue of his position as official spokesman for the Crown and the Empire. They must contain nothing that can be twisted into a wrong shape or injure the susceptibilities of people and factions whose dignity is greater than their sense of humour. In such speeches his own individuality must always be subordinated to State discretion and State policy. Consequently, he is always delighted to see a little freedom displayed in the speeches of those who are under no such obligation to speak according to sealed pattern. However, since there are more ways of killing a dog than by hanging him, and the Prince is no slave to convention, the Prince evolved on this tour a method of speeding up formal speech-making, by handing over the typescript of his official speech for publication, and extemporising a few words on his own. This plan gave the Prince time to talk to people and get into real touch. I'll never forget the face of the first mayor to whom he applied the procedure. The Prince was due to stop at this particular spot for half an hour, and the jolly old mayor occupied twenty minutes in delivering his oration of welcome. When he had finished, the Prince rose, said a dozen words of simple thanks to the mayor and audience, and with a disarming smile, handed his roll of typescript to the mayor, with the cheery suggestion that it might be read afterwards, at leisure, when the mayor had more time at his disposal. The crowd howled with delight, and the mayor himself suddenly became a human being, instead of a bunch of municipal dignity and fluttering nerves.



At most small towns there was an absolute barrage of mayors, councillors, and important citizens, complete with wives, relatives, and monopolist intentions regarding the Prince. But H.R.H. took his own line with this obstacle also. A few shakes of the hand to the principal ones, and the usual words of thanks and appreciation, and then he would make a dart for the citizens crushed into the obscurity of the back rows. You can imagine the frantic joy of the on-lookers at seeing the Prince coolly but politely move through the portentous and prominent screen of exclusiveness, and dig out, for a word or a handshake, some whiskered old farmer or humble citizen, who had been craning his neck painfully behind favoured backs in an effort to get a glimpse of the Prince.

H.R.H. takes a very perfunctory interest in the shop-window dressings of an assembly, but he has a marvellous eye for the back shelves. Of course, may I add politely, and also veraciously, H.R.H. has no intrinsic dislike of the individual whose corpulent curves are adorned with the town crest, or whatever may be the device which dangles at the end of a mayoral chain. It is the solemn and meaty formality of the office that provides the objection. It has such a habit of holding up the traffic, and putting a sort of smoke-screen over everything and everybody else. Whatever appreciation is due to the chief citizen of a town or city on this tour or any other, there is probably just as much due to the rural or urban nobody. The former strolls comfortably along from his parlour at the back of the reception-site, whereas the latter probably sweats for hours to get a glimpse



*Photo by C. Vandys, Ltd., London.*



of the Prince. It takes all sorts to make a community, and H.R.H. likes to meet the 'all sorts.' What is more, he takes much trouble to do so.

At Somerset West, Paarl, and all those farming towns and settlements which are so intimately associated with the early history of South Africa, the people were thrilled to find that the Prince was not only familiar with their present industries and ambitions, but that he knew all about old Simon and the men and events of the past. It was a source of amazement as well as local pride to find that the Prince of Wales should be as familiar with their foundations as they were themselves. His thoroughness and efficiency at his job of Imperial Ambassador impressed their intelligence as much as his frank informality stirred their sentiment. There was no eyewash about this on either side. These shrewd farmers and incipient politicians were not measuring H.R.H.'s knowledge and interest by his official speeches, and by what they had been reading about him in the local papers, but by his many personal conversations with them, and by his questions and comments.

Judging by the number of intelligent and more or less important South Africans who strove to obtain accommodation on the Royal train, and the jealousy which was aroused in official and parliamentary circles by the allotment of the limited room that was available, one would imagine that the Prince's tour was universally regarded as a super joy-ride. The chief stimulant in this competition was, of course, the honour of travelling with the Prince, but I imagine that few of the various 'big-wigs' who were tacked

on to the 'circus' from time to time in an 'attendance' capacity, experienced any unusual pleasure in the train part of the programme. In fact, one or two people in this category whom I knew well enough to inspire their confidences, confessed to being bored stiff after two or three days of it. I am referring now to people who had no special work to do other than hop out of the train and join the Prince's entourage at the successive dorp functions. One's attitude is naturally governed by the personal angle, but I have yet to meet the inveterate sightseer whose temperament would be proof against witnessing the same show a dozen times a day without getting a little restless. All these shows along the line were alike, excepting that the minor characters were changed and the scenery varied. The procedure was the same; the music—if any—was identical; the speeches were repetitions. Anyway, they all had the same note, and one speech is much like another when you are hearing them at the rate of a dozen a day.

Mind you, these dorp shows were not intrinsically dull. On the contrary, they were simply bursting with vitality and enthusiasm. Each one was the consummation of weeks of preparation and months of eager anticipation. From farm, ranch, mine, settlement, store, and kraal; English, Scotch, Irish, Dutch, Kaffir, Bantu, had come across veld and karoo on foot and horseback, by ox-wagon, mule-cart, and motor, to participate in this event of a lifetime. Every function was a study in humanity, and a remarkable demonstration of the power and ubiquity of sentiment and the personal appeal of the Prince.

But from the inside angle repetition made them monotonous, as the most exciting events can be when they occur with the frequency of habit.

The natural assumption is that the Prince was bored stiff after a week or two of this kind of thing, especially when one remembers that this tour is only one of many in his experience, and that public functions, flattery, and hero-worship fill most of the days of his life. But apart from the fact that he would have liked a little more free time for relaxation, I think he was the least bored person on the tour. I don't say he was revelling in it, for he was doing nothing of the kind. But he was treating it all as part of his day's work, with the knowledge that it was up to him, as the principal figure, to damp nobody's enthusiasm and ardour by showing signs of weariness. This attitude is that of the good soldier, the successful leader. It is an axiom in the Army, where the Prince spent his most impressionable years, that even in the dullest of routine tasks one must throw oneself into the job as if it were an entirely new experience, to maintain the keenness of one's men. After a time keenness becomes a habit. It has become a habit with the Prince. Besides, on this tour he had far too much to do in between the various shows to have time for grousing. On the rare occasions when he had an evening without a duty or engagement, he reacted to it like a schoolboy let out of school or a subaltern off duty, and gingered up the whole train.

Because these dorp shows were so much alike, I won't describe any particular one, but just give a general idea of the procedure. You can imagine the

two great white trains steaming across the rock-strewn spaces of the karoo on a blue and gold morning, whilst their passengers had breakfast and read the newspapers or mail that came aboard in the night or the early hours. And you can think of the Prince in his saloon, chatting cheerfully and inconsequentially to whoever was breakfasting with him. More probably he would be discussing details of the day's work with Sir Godfrey Thomas or Admiral Halsey, and very likely 'vetting' a speech that lay at the side of his plate. Breakfast is always a very casual meal, as it is with the average commoner who has to get to his office early. It is absolutely informal, and no one shares it with H.R.H. but members of his own personal staff.

The pilot train is usually ten minutes ahead of the Prince's train, and if any of its occupants have gone forward to the observation-car, they are the first to observe signs that these great brown distances of dawn have human habitants. A straggling farm in a clump of trees may provide the first indication, or a scattered herd of sheep or cattle. And at last a station.

The pilot train slows down, and in due course slides to a halt in a miniature forest of waving flags and floral decorations. Usually the arrival of this train is greeted with a storm of wild cheering, due partly to the assumption that it contains the Prince and partly to reflected glory. Immediately it disgorges its freight of newspaper-men, photographers, cinematographers, officials, messengers, and—if the dorp is a town and there are distant functions to attend—

the six Royal cars and their chauffeurs are unloaded. Upon the reserved spaces of the platform are grouped the local authorities, and—if the district is sufficiently populated to produce a military unit—there is also a uniformed guard of honour. The local police officials are there in full strength in their full-dress uniforms, and beyond the barriers is massed the population of the surrounding countryside, in best clothes and gala attire.

Natives of all sorts and sizes hang over the fenced approaches, some wearing skin loin-cloths, others ancient khaki greatcoats and every other type of garment. There is no shouting yet. The preliminary cheers have died away into the sunlit distances of the surrounding veld, and the station hums with a low note of expectancy and a subdued bustle of activity.

Presently from around a rocky bend, or in the unimpeded distance, appears the second white train, gleaming with a kind of conscious pride. The groups on the platform commence pulling themselves together; the belted—tightening their belts; the crowds sigh; the 'press' and the camera-men fidget into position. Slowly but magnificently the Prince's train slides into the station, and every living thing seems to hold its breath. A couple of equerries descend from a middle coach. The mayor and his supporters step forward. The commander of the guard of honour jerks himself and his men to attention, moving only his eyes in the direction of the small group standing on the platform outside the emblazoned saloon. In a minute or two, out of the same white coach steps another figure in a lounge-suit:



slight, informal, calm ; grave in expression. If the waiting crowds can see him, a terrific crash of deep-throated cheering reverberates and eddies around the station. If not, there is just a low murmur or buzz amongst the platform occupants as the Prince is recognised and steps up to the mayor. A few words and handshakes with the various dignitaries and a forward stride in the direction of the guard of honour.

Its commander raps out an order. If there is a band, it plays 'God Save the King,' during which the Prince removes his hat. H.R.H. then rapidly inspects the guard, and afterwards moves to the station exit, followed by his staff and the local luminaries. Then the crowd lets loose its long bottled enthusiasm. As the roar of its welcome ebbs and flows to the movements of this perfectly ordinary-looking young man in an unobtrusive suiting who smiles gravely and seems to look the whole crowd in the face with his steady blue eyes, one thrills to the spine with a queer and indefinable pride. Afterwards there is the usual business of a formal reception on a dais outside the station, or in a crowded square, followed by inspections of ex-service men, Scouts, Guides, oldest inhabitants, and anything else the town may have to exhibit. Always, there are the school-children, and invariably they sing in their thrilling childish voices 'God Bless the Prince of Wales.' And sometimes they refuse to stop singing it when its normal end is reached. Their excitement at seeing the Prince in the flesh is always too marvellous for words. Incidentally H.R.H. adores kids, so they get a lot of attention from him, and their fresh, young enthusi-

asm and shy friendliness give him great pleasure.

If the dorp is a small one, the whole of the proceedings take place at the side of the railway-line, on the long, rough timber platform that is called a station. At some of these I have known the Prince shake every individual by the hand.

At one dorp the chief item of local interest was an old Dutch farmer, who had been there since the year one and looked as though he had never had a bath in that period. He told the Prince that he had got thirteen children. The Prince smiled cheerfully and, to the infinite delight of his audience, exclaimed: "Thirteen! That's supposed to be a very unlucky number. You'd better do something about this before we meet again."

It is not without interest to mention that before any of these shows were over, the 'press' reports were on the wires *en route* to the news agencies and newspapers of Africa; and—if the show was a biggish one—to the cable offices which link Africa with the rest of the civilised globe. As the newspaper correspondents scribbled down their reports at the scene of action, messenger boys collected the 'copy,' and relayed it to the train where the train telegraph officials waited in readiness. Often before a correspondent had finished writing his description of a function, the first part of it had reached the office of his news editor, or was being tapped out on the ocean cables to its oversea destinations.

Usually, before a show was quite over the whole outfit of the pilot train was back on board. And by the time the Prince and his staff returned to the line on

locally lent cars, the pilot train had moved on to obtain its ten minutes' lead. The Prince was usually the last to climb on to his train, and invariably stood in full view on the observation-platform at the end of his coach waving acknowledgment of the parting cheers. And so on to the next place on the official schedule.

When the last halt of the day was at a place large enough to possess accommodation for dancing, or where the inhabitants could manage to improvise a floor, there was always a dance arranged in the hope that the Prince would attend. And he always did. What is more, however primitive the conditions and however humble the assembly, he enters into its spirit with as much obvious enjoyment as if it were a private party in London, containing only his own friends. If there is any nervous stickiness or awed diffidence in a room, he has it all dispersed in a few minutes by his absolute lack of self-consciousness and his friendly ease of manner. He acts precisely as though it were the most natural thing in the world for him to be dancing with the wives and daughters of an obscure community in the middle of nowhere. The pleasure he gives on these occasions defies description, but you can imagine it. He frankly enjoys the experience, and he shows his pleasure. One hears an awful lot of chat about the Prince's keenness for dancing, pitched sometimes on a note of disapproval—usually as a likeable Royal weakness. But one never hears a word of the serious value of this amusement of the Prince's. I was present at most of the dances H.R.H. attended in South Africa, in all stratas of its social life, and thus had

ample opportunity for observation. It is my honest opinion that the Prince's penchant for dancing is one of his great assets in fulfilment of his duties to the British Constitution. It enables him to meet and mix with all classes of his father's subjects, of both sexes, on an ordinary human footing, in a personal contact which is not possible by any other means that would leave the respect for his office unimpaired. It establishes a link of mutual understanding, the power of which is difficult to estimate. The Prince's personality being what it is, and his code what it is, these dances rivet home the impression which his formal appearances and public acts have created. Half a dozen dances in a district inspire more honest affection for the Prince, and all that he stands for in the common imagination, than do fifty speeches.

One of the snags about a dorp crawl, from the Prince's point of view, was the difficulty of getting regular exercise. If there is one thing he hates more than anything, it is to let a day go by without having a good sweat. But when time and the official programme permitted, H.R.H. overcame the difficulty by stopping the train, putting on a couple of woollen sweaters and a pair of shorts, and doing a steady double of four or five miles along the track, with the Staff and one or two others trailing behind. Some of them a deuce of a long way behind, for H.R.H. is always so abominably fit that one has to move like a running 'blue' to keep pace with him.

These little interludes put him on the top of his 'form,' and, after a bath and a change into some kind of lounge suiting, he was ready for dinner and any

other old thing that might happen. Always he had an eye for anything which was happening. If he saw a group of farmers standing at the line side in the middle of the lonely veld, miles away from any official halt, he knew they had probably ridden considerable distances, merely to look at his passing train, and he often had the train slowed down, or stopped, to give them the privilege of a good look at him, or to exchange a handshake and a few words. It is incidents like this which give the key to H.R.H. He does them quite spontaneously, without any thought of their effect. He has imagination and an understanding of the other man's point of view, and like the soldier *sahib* he is, he plays up to the spirit of the game, for the game's sake.

There were two occasions when he came out of his sleeping compartment in the early hours of the morning in pyjamas, to show himself to people at wayside stations who had forgone their warm beds in the vague hope of getting a glimpse of the Prince. They were frightfully chilly occasions too, with a beastly cold wind driving up across the veld, and practically everybody but H.R.H. and these shivering loyal groups snugly tucked up in their blankets.

It was at an old Boer town called Oudtshoorn, where ostrich feathers and Republicanism are cultivated, that the Prince really got the Dutchmen jumping with delight. The town is about a couple of miles from the railway, so the cars were decanted for road transport. But outside the station was drawn up a commando. In service conditions a commando consists of a bunch of Dutchmen on horseback, with a

Bible under one arm, a rifle under the other, and a bag of mealies slung at the back of the saddle. At least, it did in the South African War. On this occasion it was minus its religious literature, its armament, and its commissariat, but otherwise the typical commando ; the uniform being any old clothing or head-gear that its members happen to wear on normal occasions. Anything less like a Royal escort does not exist. As soon as the Prince spotted it, he exclaimed, " By Jove, I'll ride in with those fellers if they've got a spare horse." And he did. He was wearing an ordinary lounge suit and a soft felt hat, and was therefore in sartorial *rapport* with the other riders, excepting that their ' lounge suits ' were extraordinary, and included a few prehistoric frock-coats and antique bowler hats. He climbed on to a big brown stallion at the head of this commando, and led it at full gallop to the town recreation-ground, where twenty-five thousand citizens had gathered from far and near to await the arrival of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, and his suite, in the lordly fleet of Royal cars. For a minute or two the crowd ignored the arrival of this equestrian dust-storm, and then quite suddenly realised that its leader was a young man with gleaming blue eyes and healthily flushed face, whose pictures had been staring them in the face for weeks. Every person in that vast crowd seemed to jump a foot into the air, and the crash of cheers was deafening. If H.R.H. had thought out the manner of his entry for a month, instead of never thinking of it at all, he could not have conceived a shorter cut to the hearts of those Dutchmen, than he achieved by revoking his Royal dignities and

riding in to a ceremonial occasion at the head of this ragged commando.

In the next two or three weeks, in Free State and Transvaal, H.R.H. rode at the head of many more commandos, into many more towns of the karoo, low veld, and high veld, thus establishing quite a new fashion of Royal progress.

If I were desirous of presenting the Prince as a prodigy, I might claim that these informal strokes of his are evidence of diplomatic genius, such as was claimed for his grandfather, King Edward, but I make no such elaborate deduction. The Prince does not do these things as a consequence of careful consideration or objective inspiration, but because he cannot help doing them. They are the expressions of his intrinsic simplicity of outlook and his delight in eluding conventionality.

At a farm in the heart of the karoo, the Prince took his first two days off duty. These week-end 'easys' were a feature of this tour, and were based upon the experience of former tours, which have taught State Departments and others that even a man so fit and vital as the Prince cannot work seven strenuous days a week for several months without creaking up. The farmhouse in which this week-end was spent was typically Dutch in architecture, but not by any means typically Dutch in appointments, in that it was the property of a South African millionaire of taste who appreciates comfort.

That, of course, was all to the good, for H.R.H. is sufficiently democratic to prefer a decent tiled bathroom to a bucket of water at a well-head, and the

products of a decent cook to the romantic, but indigestible, meals of the average *haus frau*.

In fact, this abode in the centre of African spaces was as comfortable and much more artistic than York House. It was not altogether a quiet, free and easy week-end, for there were about forty people in the house-party, and for none of them was it easy to forget that the cheery and informal young man who was their host's principal guest, was also Prince of Wales. You know what the average week-end is with a country house-party, and what ordinary people do. It was the same in this case. The Prince had his meals in the way that is common to all of us who are moderate and well-mannered eaters. He loafed a little with the illustrated papers; made conversation; talked farming; and performed the usual tour of his host's stables, stock, and farm. All of which interested him very much, as he is a farmer himself. The farm was a very large one, composed chiefly of rolling open veld, covered with short scrub from which sheep and cattle can get a certain amount of sustenance, if they work hard and don't mind walking. The air was cold, but like champagne. One got up in a morning, as the Prince remarked, feeling as though one could push the house away from its foundations.

The first day was spent in riding over the farm, and the second day in an organised shoot. There were about a dozen guns in the line, with the Prince on the right. The quarry was springbok. H.R.H. got fed-up after a longish trek on horseback and a number of ineffectual shots. His shooting was pretty bad, as a matter of fact, but that is not surprising, for his



right arm was groggy from excessive handshaking, and he had not had a day's rifle-shooting since the Lord knows when. After a picnic lunch on the veld, he took a scatter gun, two pockets of cartridges, and two of his Staff, and, leaving the party, went off for a quiet shoot on foot and got a few guinea-fowl, a partridge or two, and some duck. The Prince was well satisfied. It was a day he liked. He had spent the morning in the saddle on the veld, and the afternoon walking on his own feet.

The following day the tour, with its interminable business of ceremonies, wild enthusiasm, inspections, receptions, and so on, was resumed. I don't have to tell you about this, because any description would be repetition of what I have already said of other places. But there was one little incident which occurred on the veld outside the Prince's dining-saloon that is interesting—and typical. H.R.H. was having dinner before going up into town to a reception and ball, when a Hottentot and a couple of Kaffirs, with their wives and piccaninnies, squatted in the dust at the line side, and throughout dinner serenaded him with jazz music (bush pattern), ancient native melodies, and anything else they had inherited from their forefathers or picked up in the local dorps. They did all this on primitive native instruments, plus an American mouth-organ ; and the result was remarkably attractive. Between courses H.R.H. hummed the airs, and the minute dinner was over produced his ukelele, opened the window, and joined in the melodies. This I think is a priceless picture of the Prince off duty. On the way out, he stopped and

thanked those niggers for their entertainment, and gave them ten bob each. I could not help contrasting this incident with the conventional picture of Royalty, which would have had a line of sentries posted around the Royal train, and music provided by a glittering military band. In fact, each big town on the tour wanted to provide a military guard for the train, but the Prince would not hear of any such arrangement.



## CHAPTER XV

### EFFECT ON NATIVES

AT Port Elizabeth the Prince climbed again into uniform, this time the blue-frock uniform of the Welsh Guards, surmounted by white helmet, containing the regimental hackle of green and white feathers. It was a very ceremonious entry, like Cape Town, and its two days' programme was much the same as at the Cape. I believe there were eighty thousand people massed to greet him. It was a wonderful sight and a wonderful reception, and would have stirred the pulses of a brass image. Port Elizabeth is very English—much more English than Dutch. In the same way that the Dutch founded Cape Town, the English founded Port Elizabeth. It was here that the 1820 settlers landed, and proceeded to colonise the subtropical hinterland. The decorations at this place were marvellous, and the flowers gorgeous with tropical colouring. Every building in the place had written across its front, in varying devices, a welcome to the Prince, and all were a riot of coloured flags and bunting. Practically every shop window had in it a photograph of the Prince, and many of the blocks had large oil-paintings of the Prince for centre-pieces. Some of these, by the way, were very bizarre efforts, and a greater tribute

to the enthusiasm of the artists than to their skill as portrait copyists. One or two brought a broad grin to the Prince's face.

At night, at the Feather Market Hall, there was an enormous civic reception and ball, where H.R.H. shook hands with about four thousand people before the dancing started. These shows are jolly hard work for the Staff, not only in keeping the procession of guests on the move up to and away from the Prince, and in spotting ardent patriots who try to tail into the procession a second time, for the honour of again shaking the Prince by the hand, but in dealing with feminine blandishments and influential pressure, directed towards providing the Prince with dancing partners. There are always a couple of hundred girls who consider that they have an absolute right to dance with the Prince—or their parents think so—and many more damsels who don't care tuppence for anybody's rights so long as they can secure the privilege. However, the Prince does not care tuppence for rights either on these occasions. He did his strenuous job of receiving everybody, and did it as though he liked it, delighting all with the personal interest he displayed, and his unfailing charm of manner. And then he began to please himself. He always has an eye open for girls in the background, who stand watching him with wistful eyes in the belief that their social importance is not great enough to warrant a hope of dancing with him. One girl at this dance at Port Elizabeth, who was looking particularly forlorn and obviously rather 'out of it,' attracted the Prince's particular attention. Leaving an equerry who was

endeavouring to lead him to a string of eligible ladies in Paris frocks who represented the cream of local society, he made a bee-line for this neglected wall-flower. I object to retailing any of the Prince's private conversations, but as this one was no particular secret and has its significance as a sidelight on the Prince's character, I am breaking that rule. The conversation was something like this.

H.R.H. : " Good evening. Aren't you dancing to-night ? "

The little girl, blushing : " I haven't danced yet, sir. I know hardly any people here."

" How is that ? " asked the Prince. " Don't you live here ? "

" No, sir. I belong to a touring company—theatrical."

" Really ! " exclaimed the Prince—for she did not look the part at all. " That's rather interesting. Have you been on the stage long ? "

" Ever since I was seven," said the girl.

" Do you like it ? "

" Not much, sir," she answered rather despondently. " It's not much of a life in a small touring company ; but it is the only thing I have ever done. I get rather tired of it sometimes."

" I can sympathise with you," said the Prince, " for I'm on the stage too, in a way. I've been a showman all my life. Will you have this dance with me ? "

At the end of the dance, when the Prince left her, he said to her, " If it is any help to you in your job, you have my permission in future to say that you are under the patronage of the Prince of Wales."

For genuine human kindness, real understanding, and helpful sympathy, I think this incident is hard to beat. There is no means of knowing what effect the Prince's words may have upon that little girl-member of an itinerant theatrical company, but it is not unreasonable to assume that they gave her a different point of view of life generally, and will help her through many difficult places.

One of the last functions of the Prince's visit to Port Elizabeth—the morning after the dance—was the first *pukka* native show of the tour. The natives came from kraals over the hills, from farms and plantations, and from menial service in the town itself, shook off the garments and the ways of civilisation, and resumed their savage identities, so that they might render suitable homage to 'The Great Son of the Great White King over the Seas.'

It was rather a fine scene to gaze upon. A great mass of savages clad in skins, waving their tribal weapons in the air; and in the centre, on a raised platform, the Prince and Staff, all in full dress—the scarlet and gold of the Guards and the blue and gold of the Navy.

There were Zulus, Xosas, Basutos, Fingos, and half a dozen other of the great clans of Africa, whose fathers and grandfathers had fought with each other and the British, for those lands upon which they now stood and hailed as their one chief the son of the King of England. In front of the whole mass stood the *Mbongo*, a sort of combined prime minister, master of ceremonies, and ambassador. After the tribesmen had finished rubbing their brows on the earth in token of

submission, and joined in a deep-throated, sonorous hail of greeting, the *Mbongo* led them in the thundering chant of the *Izibongo*. In a great, rolling bass voice came the verse of this Bantu chant.

" O Prince, O Warriors,  
We see with our eyes the Great Hunter,  
The leader of the chase, the Fighter,  
The horseman, the beloved of the young children ;  
He who can be stern as the Mountains,  
Yet dances as the young winds ;  
He who is the patron of all learning and  
The friend of all things that are manly.  
Thy fame has gone before thee.  
We shall ever remember thee, and pray  
God to preserve thee  
For thy future Great Heritage.  
Thus shall we teach our children  
And our children's children  
To pray.  
A Zweliyazuma."

There were four verses of this, and at the end of each the whole assembly burst into the anthem-like refrain of the Royal salute, " We salute thee, O Prince A Zweliyazuma." It was chanted in perfect unison, by those deep-chested, bronzed African natives, and sounded like the pealing of a mighty organ. The scene resembled a page from one of Rider Haggard's stories of the majesty, power, and romance of the African races. And in the centre of it all a little group of scarlet and gold, fronted by the slender figure of a young fair-skinned Guardsman, blue-eyed, straight, and calm, receiving with inimitable dignity the homage of a people.

Finally, in his clear tones and incisive, clipped words, the Prince spoke—the interpreter translating, sentence



by sentence—telling them of the virtues of discipline, of loyalty to those in authority over them, and the way to handle the destiny that was in their hands.

As he concluded, there was a deep murmur of assent, and then there rose on the air the magnificent refrain of the Xosa song 'Ixegwana,' full of stirring harmonies and resonant chords.

As the Prince drove away, the Zulus crashed out their Royal salute of 'Bayete !'

One feels that ordinary speech is weak in comment on a scene like this. There was very little conversation in the departing cars. There was nothing one could say. One could only think of the enormous responsibility that rests on the Prince of Wales on his tours, and marvel at the personality that supports it with such ease and consummate ability, and yet retains normality of outlook. Here he had played the part of an Emperor like an Emperor. Last night he had merged himself into a dance with all the irresponsibility of youth, yet finding time and occasion to play providence to a little actress girl. And two evenings before that he had been strumming on a ukelele in chorus with a group of veld niggers, which proceeding would have been beneath the dignity of one of the local store clerks.

But the native gathering at Port Elizabeth was only a sort of mild prelude to those which followed—an *indaba* in miniature. The first big one occurred at Umtata, a place that is red in the history of Africa ; the centre of a frontier that has run with blood many times in the last hundred years. Over the surrounding valleys and hills, settlers fought with tribesmen and

tribesmen fought with each other. For seventy of that hundred years life had been the cheapest product of the district. Tembus scrapped with Xosas and all the other Kaffir and Bantu clans, and then joined with each other to repel the invasion of the Zulu marauders from the Natal border. But as these Zulus were led by the gent who invented pagan *esprit de corps*, and converted the Zulu nation from a savage, undisciplined rabble into an organised, well-drilled army of regiments and impis, bringing the fighting spirit of the Zulu to its peak of ruthless efficiency, half the Bantu clans of the Transkei were wiped from the face of the earth, and the other half scattered to the four winds.

Yet here were the survivors of victors and vanquished, gathered together with their new generations to do homage to 'The Son of the Great White Chief from over the Water,' and to see what manner of man he was. For the previous month the *indunas* had been marching in from the utmost borders of a territory of sixteen thousand square miles, from kraal and village, impelled by the magic of a name that stood for the glory and tradition of the dominant white race: Tembus, Fingos, Griquas, Gaikas, Gcalekas, Basutos, Red Kaffirs, and Zulus, lusty heathen whose vitality and traditions are still unimpaired by thirty years' subservience and comparative peace. Not a man of them cared a curse for the impersonal thing which is known by the name of a Government, and not one of them would have trekked a mile of his own free will to greet a whole regiment of premiers and presidents. But they had eagerly spent long weeks on the long miles of a hard road to

see a young chief who was son of a line of chiefs whose might was begat in a past that was older than their oldest traditions ; to see a legend come to life.

I have spent many months on *ulendo* and *safari* with Bantus, and know them well, so it is not difficult to imagine the gossip of headmen, chiefs, and the full-grown of the rank and file as they squatted around their camp-fires before the Prince's arrival. It would be : " We have heard much of this young White Chief whom we have come to greet. Let us now see him with our eyes and know if he is for our hearts as well as for our words."

Thus twenty-five thousand tribesmen stood on those rolling green downs to the west of Umtata, their dark brown bodies gleaming in the brilliant sunlight, and rendered fealty to the Prince.

On this occasion the Prince wore the full-dress uniform of the Welsh Guards, the one he wears for levees at Buckingham Palace and all full-dress ceremonials in London. He had on all his decorations, medals, and orders, and across his scarlet tunic the broad blue ribbon of the Knights of the Garter. Admiral Halsey was in the full-dress uniform of a British Admiral, absolutely laden with gold lace and jewelled decorations ; Piers Leigh was in Equerries uniform ; Dudley North and White in the blue and gold full-dress of the Navy ; the Governor-General's A.D.C.—attached for the tour—had on his most decorative suiting ; and the Union Defence Department representatives were wearing the grey-blue of the South African military forces

It was a 'wonderful sight': impressive to the last

degree. The vast, undulating waves of muscular tribesmen, with their barbaric ornaments, their skin karosses, the waving plumes of their head-dresses, the forest of assagais, knobkerries, and tall oval shields of hide—the personification of pagan Africa and its ancient traditions and customs. And on the dais above, H.R.H. and the little group of red and blue, personifying the power and tradition of Britain and the dominance of Empire. It is difficult to avoid the heroic note, for the whole show was on that note. It was as though one had stepped into an epic story. This feeling took possession of us at the moment of arrival through our auditory nerves as well as the optical ones, as the *mbongo* chanted his poetic introduction, and the whole mass of natives sighed their assent to his advice that they should ‘Tremble, for the whole earth was shaking with the approach of the Chief of Chiefs.’

This particular *mbongo* was about six feet six in height, and wore a head-dress of tall black plumes. His loins were girt with a huge white sheepskin. Raising his ‘keri’ in the air, like some savage God of Invocation, he rolled out a sonorous command. In answer pealed the Royal salute—‘BAYETE.’ And then followed a dead silence, in which H.R.H. made his speech—the speech of a ruler to his subject peoples. The speech was rather long, and it was stirring, but during it not a sound was heard excepting the voice of the Xosa interpreter. The Bantus never interrupt a speech by applauding before it is finished.

Every eye in that vast assembly was on the Prince, in a sort of awed and magnetised stare. ‘As the last

word passed the lips of the interpreter, and the *mbongo* again raised his keri, the silence was riven again by the 'BAYETE,' delivered as from one mighty throat.

Then began the ceremony of the gifts.

One Jongilizwe Dalindyebo, Paramount Chief of the Tembus, went on his knees and presented the Prince with a set of assagais and shield, in token of the Brotherhood of Blades and submission to the Prince as Chief of all Chiefs.

Jeremiah Moshesh, the son of the Basuto strategist, who led the Basutos against Boer and Briton in the Basuto War, presented an elephant tusk in symbolic expression of his tribe's readiness to rally to battle at the call of the Prince.

And while these gifts were brought up and laid at the Prince's feet, Dalindyebo chanted his oration of fealty, which he ended by bestowing on H.R.H. the Bantu name of 'I'langa likanya,' the interpretation of which is 'The Shining Sun.' Naming a stranger according to his most noticeable feature or trait is a great habit with the Bantus. 'Shining Sun' obviously struck the whole crowd as a particularly appropriate title for the Prince, for it was taken up instantly and repeated in deep sighing cadences.

When the Prince presented silver-headed malacca walking-sticks to the chiefs, the eyes of some of them shone with such a dog-like fidelity and adoration, that for the first time in this show one relaxed to the level of a perfectly ordinary grin. This facial expression was so pathetically incongruous to their warlike aspect, that one could not help the smile. But the

Prince never turned a hair. For him no smile was permissible.

That night twenty-five thousand awed worshippers of 'I'langa likanya' squatted round a thousand fires, burying their teeth in half-raw meat from the carcasses of the cattle which 'I'langa likanya' had given to them as the parting gift of a Chief of Chiefs. And while the news of his greatness and splendour travelled to the kraals of the horizons, 'I'langa likanya' was back on his train, wearing a tweed suit and a boyish grin, strumming on his ukelele, and teaching his Staff the art of relaxation to jazz music. There is no Royal rigidity about H.R.H., no haloed obfuscation. The supreme dignity with which he leads those ceremonies which demand dignity is part of him, but only part. Without effort and without loss to his personality, he can switch to the plane of extreme informality. Always he fits into his environment as an intrinsic part of it. He has an almost uncanny knack of always doing the right thing, at the right moment, in the right place.

Twenty-four hours after the great pageant, where he showed to the native races of the Transkei the deportment of an Emperor and the dignity of a Ruler, thus touching the native imagination in the one way in which it can be touched—through its eyes, by spectacle and pomp—he went direct to the hearts of a thousand farmers by showing them an informality which exceeded their own. He took the lead at a public function in pyjamas and dressing-gown. It was not a case of shouting from the train a cheery greeting to a few wayside visitors, but participation

in an organised reception at a decorated and crowded station. The Prince knew nothing of the function, or even of Umvani, where it occurred, until the train halted just before dawn for some purpose to do with the timing of the day's official programme. It was known to the people of the district that the Prince's train would reach Umvani in the early hours, but it was also known that its occupants would be asleep, and that the organisers of the tour had not found it possible to include the place in the official itinerary. But the local people had betted on the much advertised sportsmanship of the Prince, and despite official discouragement had arranged a show. H.R.H. was in bed when the train stopped, and he became aware of the presence of a cheering crowd. At once he inquired what was happening outside, and he was informed that nearly a thousand people had waited through the night in the hope that he might speak to them for a few moments. He did. There was no time to dress, so he put on his slippers and dressing-gown, got out of the train, and Umvani had its function and a five minutes' speech from the Prince. Needless to say, that crowd went crazy with enthusiasm.

Bloemfontein, the capital of the Orange Free State, produced another great reception for H.R.H., and the various functions lasted a couple of days. Its enthusiasm was remarkable, in that Bloemfontein is a hot-bed of Nationalism, and the note of all the speeches, and everything that happened, hinged on the Prince's personality, not upon his position as son of his father. The whole community—judging by its talk and actions—seemed quite flattened out by the realisa-

tion that H.R.H. was a real live human proposition, and not just a Royal peg upon which to hang fulsome sentiment and British tradition: that there was so much more in him than a taste for dancing and a Royal father. As a Dutch member of the Union Parliament put it to me in the Bloemfontein Club, in an epigram he had cribbed from a parson down the line, "It is not the Royalty of the person which has got us, it is the personality of the Royalty. There's not a burgher in this town who would not be proud to let the Prince walk on him."

This Dutchman might have been stretching fact in this expression of the extremity of Dutch affection, for he had lapped up a few drinks, but I am perfectly certain that he was fairly close on the mark. A hard-headed old Boer leader of African war days, who was strongly suspected of being one of the moving spirits of a rebellion which misfired about five years ago, came straight to me after he had been talking with the Prince, and said, "Major Verney, I'd do anything on God's earth for that Prince of yours."

H.R.H. entered Bloemfontein as he entered Oudtshoorn—at the head of a commando, and with even greater effect. This commando was twelve hundred strong, and carried rifles in the good old Boer fashion. The ponies got as excited as the men, and the whole bunch of them swept through the crowded streets of Bloemfontein at full gallop, like a horde of civilian raiders. As the last mile of the ride was on asphalt, the Prince tried to check the pace for the sake of the horses' feet, but as he remarked afterwards,



"There was nothing doing. It was just hell-for-leather."

The sentimental effect of this ride into Bloemfontein was clinched when the commando halted and the Prince, from the saddle of his sweating charger, addressed the burghers in their own language. He had spent quite a few hours of the previous day's train journey in mugging up this speech in Afrikaans. Finally, at the municipal party in the park, after the speeches of welcome and thanks, H.R.H. turned to the mayor and said, "Now I am going to shake hands with everybody."

I don't know how many people there were present, but I should estimate five thousand. I believe he actually shook hands with the whole lot. For that little effort I think he deserves a bar to his Military Cross. There was no particular reason why he should have taken on that hefty, horny-handed crowd at modified ju-jitsu. It was quite spontaneous on his part. He remarked later that he did it without thinking. "It was jolly decent of them to be so pleased to see me ; and they'd come from all over the map." I am not surprised that he got an awful licking at golf the next day from the Bishop of Bloemfontein.

In those two days at Bloemfontein he made about two dozen speeches, inspected all kinds of corps, rode in half a dozen processions, talked everything from the principles of nursing to scientific agriculture ; attended two luncheons, a municipal banquet, and on the one intervening night danced until two in the morning. And he found time to visit an old battlefield where a famous British regiment got cut up by

the Boers in the South African War, and to lay a wreath on the grave of a past Boer President.

Slap in the centre of the Union of South Africa, sandwiched between the veld of the Orange Free State and the mountains of Natal, is Basutoland, whose inhabitants and their warrior ancestors have consistently refused to do homage to anyone but their own chief and the Kings of England. It is one of those places wherein the Word of — has not been violated by African political expedience or changes in the personnel and policy of British Cabinets. This word was given in 1884, when the Basuto nation met in a great ' Pitso ' on the Maseru plains, and agreed to accept the suzerainty of Britain in return for protection from external aggression and respect of its native rights. The Basutos also agreed to abandon their unpopular custom of massacring the tribes outside their own borders, and otherwise interfering with the operations of British rule in the adjoining states. The Basutos had been conquered thirty years before that, but the conquest was more nominal than effective, and cost us a few divisions of troops. It had also been administered for twelve years before the historic Pitso, but the administration, conducted by Cape Colony, had been as nominal as the conquest.

The Basutos strongly resented the interference of this colonial administration with their rights as Basutos, and when the Government decided to simplify the ruling of the Bantu races, by disarming them all, and got busy with the Basutos, there was a first-class row. The Basutos rose in rebellion, and proceeded to eliminate the administrators. Cape Colony spent

an awful lot of money and lives in an endeavour to reduce the Basutos to submission. After seven ineffective years of this futile policy, the colony asked the Imperial Government to run the show. Hence the 1884 Pitso; hence Basuto independence; hence the anomaly of an Imperial Protectorate in the middle of the self-governing Union of South Africa.

There is about ten thousand square miles of Basutoland, and just over a third of a million Basutos. The only white people permitted to live in the territory are Imperial officials, missionaries, and a certain number of traders to supply the widening requirements of the natives. The white population—including wives and families—does not amount to more than nine hundred. The Basuto is a feudalist by instinct, and a monarchist by taste. Kings, customs, and traditions are his gods. Education and the missionaries cannot make him more than scornfully tolerant of democratic government. His philosophy is that only a fool would choose fifty masters in the place of one leader. Talk to him of his Chief, or the Great White Chief, and you have him interested; but talk to him of mass government and you bore him stiff. Politicians are traders, and a trader is only a man who sells you cloth. In effect, when the Basutos refused to be controlled by the Government of Cape Colony, they were refusing to take orders from traders. And when they held their Pitso in 1884 they were signifying their readiness to obey the will of the Great White King. An entirely different matter. Since then, the British Throne, by virtue of wise rule in the Protectorate and

the Imperial code of the officials, has become a great Basuto tradition.

It follows, therefore, that when the Royal train entered Basutoland, carrying the Prince of Wales, the Basuto nation had the thrill of its history, and H.R.H. had one of the most impressive experiences of his life. Fifty thousand horsemen and twenty thousand foot assembled in a green dip in the hills, and chanted the Chant of the Chiefs. Another fifty thousand horse and foot draped the surrounding hills, and flung their giant greeting to the gaunt rampart of the Barea, and hurled it to the purple heights of the surrounding mountains. It was the greatest Pitso in the history of the Basuto peoples.

From mountains and hills, into the big green oval depression, the Basutos poured like living lava. The horsemen wheeling in regiments and clans, and the footmen pressing remorselessly forward in serried ranks, spears and axes gleaming in the sunlight against a sea of dark bronze faces, and red and yellow robes. It was a great sight. A native nation grouping for the event of its life. The people of a country massing to realise a dream : to see and make obeisance to the Heir of a King whose Empire straddled the earth and the far seas : to establish human touch with the aloof entity of whom they had been told since birth : a Chief to whom white and black of Africa bent the knee and gave unswerving service. That was the Basuto idea.

With the speed of a trained army, and with an organisation of movement that was surprising, the vast masses grouped themselves into units of clans, and

took position. Seventy thousand of them in a two-mile saucer, and the remainder echeloned up to the skyline, forming a living frieze of bronze statuary against the blue of the sky.

And in the centre of that green saucer, now a solid phalanx of bronze faces and coloured robes and black-plumed head-dresses, a tiny space of flowers, bunting, and a big Union Jack, surrounded by a tiny margin of white people—officials, missionaries, traders, and a few visitors.

And then came the procession. H.R.H. and Staff in full-dress uniform, wearing everything they possessed that glittered, accompanied by the Commissioner and entourage, all in full-dress uniforms. A gallant splash of red, blue, gold, and silver, white helmets and fluttering plumes.

As the Prince took position, a hundred and twenty thousand Basutos flung out their greeting: "Khotso Pula!" Three times those thousands of deep voices spoke as one: "Khotso Pula!" It was tremendous. The greeting thundered out as if the mountains had spoken.

H.R.H. stood very straight and calm, but fingered the buttons of his tunic. All eyes were on him, noting his slightest movement. He took everything frightfully calmly, as though he were in the habit of standing up on a platform, being worshipped as a God by a valley full of African clansmen.

Then began the usual speeches and addresses, this time being interpreted into Sesuto.

The chiefs brought their gifts, and received from the Prince the usual presents of silver-headed walking-

sticks. These chiefs, by the way, provided the one false note in a native spectacle that was otherwise perfect. Most of them wore top-hats and morning-coats.

By his demeanour and his delivery, the Prince stirred that crowd to the frieze of bronze horsemen on the crest of the hills. As he spoke, and his sentences were repeated by the interpreter and magnified by the 'loud-speakers,' one could see the dense ranks sway in response, like tall grass in a wind.

The final salutes of 'Khotso Pula!' came out like claps of reverberating thunder.

The following week-end was spent at a place called Westminster, which is the middle of a stretch of grain country and undulating park-land. The Duke of Westminster has a huge farm here, and there was a cheery little party assembled to give H.R.H. some polo, for which he was absolutely gasping. But the weather made polo impossible. It rained like the deuce the whole time, and was most depressing and particularly disappointing for everybody. On the Saturday night there was a dance in the school-room, the floor space of which had been augmented by annexing an outdoor floor. This had been hastily rigged with a tarpaulin roof, which was only good in patches. The rain dripped through with a persistence that thoroughly upset the local residents, who wanted everything to be as nice as possible for the Prince. Most of them felt quite sure that he wouldn't stop more than a few polite minutes, and that they would not blame him for clearing out as soon as he decently could. But H.R.H., in his usual masterly fashion and very gayest manner,

took charge of the proceedings and converted a damp and doleful evening into a particularly bright and successful one.

He strolled up to the band, asked for a certain tune, and then turned and led the crowd in singing it. The song was : " It ain't gonna rain no mo' . "

Naturally the gloom went as if by magic. Incidentally, whilst singing this melody, he protected himself from raindrops with a coloured sunshade which he had collected from somewhere.

Apart from this cheery little dance, the Westminster week-end was a washout.

H.R.H. is steeped in military history, and like most soldiers never misses inspecting any old battlefield that he may be near. Ladysmith and its famous siege was one of the most famous events in the South African War. Consequently, at Ladysmith the greater part of a day was spent in climbing about the surrounding heights and kopjes, where so many famous battles were fought and where Boer bullets decimated some of our most famous regiments.

In the afternoon there was an excursion to Spion Kop, and a terrific climb up its slopes. The action at Spion Kop was one of the most gallant and one of the most bloody in the history of the Boer wars. Several of our regiments had taken it, and were in occupation of its table-like top, when the hidden Boer artillery commenced shelling it with murderous effect, and from a position to which our people could make no reply. Our fellows hung on, and were nearly wiped out. I did not go up Spion Kop on this occa-

sion, but General Tanner, a friend of mine, accompanied the Prince as official representative of the Union Defence Department. Unfortunately, as it was known that H.R.H. intended visiting Spion Kop, a lot of townspeople and visitors were already on the plateau when the Prince and Tanner reached the crest. Tanner was very disgusted to find this crowd there, and said as much to the Prince.

"Here," said the Prince, "they might have left me alone. The very last thing in the world that I want to hear on this sacred spot is, 'Three cheers for the Prince of Wales.'"

Tanner, who has met the Prince several times before, and entertained him in France during the War, remarked, "I have never seen the Prince as serious as he was when he said that."

Of course he was serious. What soldier would not gravely resent the intrusion of a curious and applauding crowd in such circumstances. The Prince may be the most popular figure on the world's stage, but he is not a professional actor. Although he calls himself a showman, he is playing no impersonation. He is the real thing. And being the real thing, one does not have to marvel at the reality of his sentiments or his gravity.

Another conception of the Prince is that he is always a perfect model of politeness, and that in public at least he would not say boo to a goose. I have much pleasure in relating a small story that may help to knock that inane notion on the head. At some place on this tour, the name of which does not matter, H.R.H. was standing in front of ten or twelve thousand kiddies,



whilst they sang to him 'God Bless the Prince of Wales.' The Prince, as I have said before, adores children. On this occasion, he was for some reason particularly touched by their welcome. There was a quality about it that was deeply stirring, almost sacred. As their pure young voices were uplifted suddenly in a hymn, instead of the usual shrill shrieks of applause, H.R.H. stood very still. I could not see his face, because I was standing behind him, but I felt that he was intensely moved. As the last notes of the hymn died away in the sunlit air, there followed a pause, tense and breathless. It was dramatic and full of feeling. In the middle of it a woman rushed up to the Prince and thrust an autograph book at him. "Won't you please sign your name in this for me, sir?" she gushed. H.R.H. stared at her for a few seconds, then he spoke: "No. I will NOT sign your book." And he stepped down amongst the children.

If ever an enterprising autograph-hunter deserved a rebuff, it was that foolish woman, for pushing herself forward at such a moment.

## CHAPTER XVI

### IN NATAL

THE Prince's week at Durban was, I believe, more typical of his general effect upon the essentially British communities of the Empire than was any portion of his South African tour.

In the welcome of its white population, one had the feeling that it was far more of a welcome home than a greeting. It had in it a quality which one might expect of the population of a home city transplanted *en masse* to another country. Its welcome and its entire attitude towards H.R.H. had in it the calmly possessive fervour of a populace that is exclusively British. Natal—of which Durban is the great seaport, fashionable watering-place, business centre, and principal city—is in fact more British in blood, customs, habits, and traditions than any other part of the Union of South Africa. It has never been anything else since its inception. Durban is the only city in the Union where the white population is not divided by racial questions. If at any time the Union of South Africa should declare itself a Republic, or even go as far as to claim complete autonomy, Natal will probably secede from the Union. There is no secret about this. Secession from the Union is actually being advocated at the present moment by the extremists: and the

only reason why there is disagreement on the subject in Durban, is that secession would probably deflect most of the Transvaal trade to the Cape. With such ardent Britainism as this (it is much more concentrated than Imperialism), you can imagine that Durban was doing more than greet an ambassador in welcoming the Prince. It was receiving its own. It was greeting the favourite of the family. And it was doing it with an insular pride and a conscious arrogance that was magnificent and touching. When Durban sang 'God Save the King,' and raised its voice to 'Bless the Prince of Wales,' it was not paying a tribute, but expressing a religion. The Prince did not have to prove himself to Durban. He was Prince of Wales, and that was enough.

Durban is English, with a Scotch accent and an Eastern breath. It is a city of broad streets, fine public buildings, exotic flowers, American tramcars, Chinese rickshaws drawn by plumed Zulus, taxis, luxurious automobiles, Asiatics, big stores, first-, second- and third-rate hotels, big businesses, lapis-lazuli seas, green-clad hills, and a great golden beach muzzled by man-eating sharks. It was different from any place the Prince had seen before, yet it reminded him of a dozen places he had seen on previous tours. He was garlanded with jasmine in the streets, pelted with flowers in the by-ways, fêted in the squares, haloed in civic halls, and ambushed by Peter Pans. This last item was unique and infinitely charming. It was the usual children's demonstration, but in a manner after the kiddies' own hearts. Fifteen thousand children, not assembled by schools and

classes, but scattered over some beautiful grounds, dressed up with all the ingenuity that fairy stories could inspire and skilful hands achieve. Bare-legged elves armed with bags of rose petals danced about him; bigger children carried floral arches over his head; dragons lurked in the bushes; diminutive hobby-horse knights in mediæval costume pranced ahead of him; clowns, columbines, quaint-shaped animals leaped and hobbled in his train; comic mandarins and radiant cupids lurched and leaped around him. Youth, and the spirit of gay childhood in its panoply of make-believe, rioted around this 'Prince Who Had Come True.' It was rather fortunate that none of the photographers could pass that gay bodyguard, and get near enough or be still enough for a 'close-up' of H.R.H. on this occasion, or there would have been let loose on the world another wave of Prince smiles of the most irresponsible variety, for he had a great rag with those kids, and loved every minute of it.

In the afternoon of that day, Durban gave him something else that he had not had before in Africa. He had seven chukkas of polo at the Durban polo-ground and played a remarkably good game. After that—which is enough in the way of exercise for most men—he motored down to the Durban Club, and put in an hour at squash racquets, by way of gingering up an appetite for an official dinner, and getting into trim for Durban's big ball.

The godsend about Durban from the Prince's private point of view was polo and squash. Also there were some jolly cabaret dances at the Country

Club that were entirely minus any formality or 'big-wigs' of either sex. These dances, by the way, were exceedingly attractive. But for the warm shimmering waters of the Indian Ocean, which could be seen from the dance-room and the verandahs, it might have been Hurlingham or Ranelagh. Talking of informal dances, a lot of people I meet have an idea that the Prince possesses the quite ordinary masculine penchant for a pretty girl and a dark corner during the intervals. As a matter of fact, this idea, like a lot of other equally feasible ones, is misleading. He likes a pretty girl—show me the man who does not—and I have never known him deliberately and for sheer preference select a girl to dance with whose face was her least asset. But, on the other hand, I have never seen him disappear with her out of sight and range of everybody, as quite a few of us do in the course of an evening's dance. And I have never heard of him doing so—from anyone who has any first-hand knowledge. H.R.H.'s attitude to the other sex is chivalry anchored to the ideal. And it does not matter who the woman is, whether she is a little actress girl, a lady from the suburbs, or a duchess, his attitude is always the same. He has just as much right as you or I to kiss a girl if he wants to, and if she wants to, and nobody but a human jar of vinegar or a hunk of hypocrisy could blame him. But he just does not indulge in the popular pastime of promiscuous flirtation. It does not amuse him, and it does not square with his ideas of what is up to him. I could let myself go quite a lot on this subject, because it always 'gets my goat' to hear people repeat with a knowing air, and an innuendo

wink, "The Prince has a pretty good time, you know." He does have a good time, when he gets the chance and his job permits, but his good time is quite a different good time from what many people mean who measure him by their own metre. A man who is always in hard training like the Prince, and is an active player of games when not busy with a very large-size job, has not as a rule much use for the parlour tricks of the overfed and under-exercised. So when you hear of him dancing half a dozen dances in succession with one girl, or taking another girl on from the dance where he met her to another dance where she may not have been invited, don't jump to the conclusion that he is having a flirtation, for the chances are a thousand to one against that banal solution.

H.R.H. interrupted his Durban visit for two days to attend another native show in Zululand. I am describing it, not only because it was different from the other native shows, but because the effect of his visit provides a particularly striking illustration of his unique value to the Empire in relation to the native races.

The Zulu is the warrior of Africa. In physique I do not think he has his equal in any other part of the world. Ninety per cent., I should think, are six feet and over in height, and they have the chest and muscular development of professional strong-men. There are, for instance, several thousand 'tame' ones in Durban, engaged as rickshaw coolies. That is to say, they get their daily bread by running about the Durban streets—many of which involve 'changing

down ' on a twenty horse-power car—hauling a vehicle containing a couple of full-grown passengers. Their history is one of bloodshed and bravery. Forty-five years ago they slaughtered a third of a British Army in fair combat, their arms being nothing but assagais and axes. Twenty years ago a section of them rebelled against the administration, and a force of sixteen thousand troops armed with modern weapons was needed to squash that little disturbance. Zulu courage is a by-word on the continent of Africa. It is not the result of religious fanaticism like the fighting courage of most native races. It is the courage of logic. The Zulu slogan in battle is, "If we go forward we die. If we go backward we die. Let us go forward and die." It is also his philosophy in peace. For that reason, the Zulu has never been really subjected. If you see him in the streets of a town, or in a mine compound, wearing tattered trousers and a shirt, or again as a domestic 'house-boy,' he is still a Zulu, self-reliant and upstanding. He is doing these jobs to earn money to pay his hut tax, and achieve the means of future independence in his own kraal in Zululand, where he can live the life of a man.

At Eshowe a Royal body-guard of Zulu warriors, plumed and savagely magnificent, escorted the Prince and a glittering Staff to the place of honour on the centre of a sloping valley where the Zulu impis were silently awaiting the arrival of the son of their King-Emperor. It would be difficult to forget that scene of pagan power and barbaric glory on those green downs of Zululand, historic with the memories of

Isandhlwana, Rorke's Drift, and the valiant epics of British squares fighting heroically to the last man in preference to surrender to the overwhelming hordes of the Zulu impi. That tiny group of scarlet-and-gold guardsmen gathered on a dais beneath the British flag and the Royal Standard, surrounded by forty thousand superb Zulu warriors whose great shields of black-and-white hide gleamed ominously in the morning sunlight, brought to the mind's eye a vivid picture of those past events. But on this occasion, instead of the clamour of combat and the frenzy of killing and the whistle of assagais, throbbed the thunder of a Royal salute—'Bayete,' and the song of Zulu greeting, 'N'kosi, N'kosi, N'kosi, bayete.'

Grouped close to the front of the Royal dais were the eighty-three chiefs of the Zulu nation, in the half-moon formation of an impi. The great *indaba* commenced with speeches, presentations, and obeisances. A few of the chiefs wore 'Bond Street' clothes, and a few others were in garments which appeared to have been supplied by a firm of theatrical costumiers. Unlike the Indian, the African native chief perceives more dignity in a morning-coat and a top-hat or a comic-opera uniform, than he does in his native attire. It gives him a feeling of equality with his white rulers, and in his idea presents evidence of this equality to his tribesmen, to whom he rigorously denies any such privilege. This peculiar vanity of his is only exhibited on State occasions. But even the Zulu shares it.

However, incongruous as this note was, it was entirely swamped by the native dignity of the Zulu.



One forgot it almost as soon as one observed it; one realised that European clothing was no indication of decadence in the individual and no mark of Zulu debasement. Nothing could detract from that impressive pageant of primitive power, savage virility, and Zulu tradition.

Solomon ka Dinizulu, the premier chief, was the first to speak, and his speech expressed the intrinsic pride and dignity of the Zulu—the dignity of a warrior race that values itself, that has a fine respect for itself. Said Solomon, in the course of his sonorous oration of greeting to the Prince: "But we are Zulus. A nation of men. Every free nation has the right to make its own laws. O Prince, we claim that right. It is our hope that we may be allowed to exercise that right in the future. We are thy loyal subjects, and we are a nation." Thus did Solomon, the chief of all the Zulus, claim the right of a Zulu chief to make direct appeal to his Sovereign Lord, and to show his disdain of the laws of an impersonal administration.

Then spoke up another chief, one Mankulumana, whose words and deeds for two generations spoke loud in Zulu councils. "These chiefs are all children," said he to the Prince. "Our only regret is that we are not immortal, for I should like to live for ever to experience such occasions as this."

Another chief proclaimed proudly: "There is only one homage in our hearts, and that is to thee and thy King-father."

The Prince listened gravely with a dignity even greater than that of the Zulu chiefs, his hand on the hilt of his sword, his decorations gleaming in the sun-

shine. An Emperor with a black nation at his feet, H.R.H. doing the job of Empire.

And then he rose to his feet, his steady blue eyes dominating chiefs and tribesmen, and delivered his judgments. His speech was received in profound silence. Not a word was missed. It was wise, statesmanlike, understanding, inspiring. But, best of all, it was delivered in the clear ringing tones of a soldier. No hesitation, no fumbling, no gesture. It carried conviction. It admitted no denial. Yet it was the man who spoke rather than the words he uttered that put the heart and the depth into the thrice-repeated 'Bayete' with which it was received.

As the rolling thunder of this salute died away, that line of proud Zulu chiefs moved forward and made obeisance to the will and personality of a soldier-prince who spoke like a man and looked like a king.

For the Death Dance of the Zulu impis, the Prince was enthroned on a chair on the grass, with Staff and a few privileged guests on the dais behind him. At his feet sat the chiefs, and around them the *Mkundi* of Counsellors. To the immediate front lay a great stretch of greensward like an empty arena. Massed around, packing the slopes of the valley, stood the Zulu impis awaiting the pre-battle ceremony of the Death Dance. Forty thousand magnificent bronze tribesmen, girt with skins and wearing towering head-dresses of feathers.

At the far end of the 'arena' two thousand picked warriors, in full battle array, stood in close formation. All wore head-dresses of black *sakabula* plumes, and each carried the big oval Zulu shield of black-and-white

hide, a sheaf of throwing assagais and a stabbing assagai or a knobkerrie. An awe-inspiring picture. For a couple of minutes there was a complete silence, in which nothing moved but the feathers of the forest of head-dresses in the wind. Then, from that threatening phalanx of fearsome savagery at the arena end, came the sound of the opening bars of the Death Chant, a deep-chested mutter of intimidation that grew louder and louder until the air throbbed with the measured menace of it. As the chant surged into its vicious fullness, assagais and knobkerries commenced to quiver and shake to rising passions. Suddenly the chant surged to *forte*, and simultaneously the whole two thousand crested warriors sprang forward a pace, their bare feet hitting the earth with a perfectly timed impact and a force that we could feel at the dais. Then crouching low on the ground behind their shields, they leaped high in the air and forward again, punctuating the chant with a terrific battle-cry. Now their feet began to beat the earth in gathering frenzy, their shields flashing to right and left in repulse of imaginary enemies, their powerful limbs moving backwards and forwards in thrust of the stabbing assagais, their bodies flexing to the motions of hurling the throwing assagais. Teeth gleamed in black-bearded faces, muscles rippled, eyes glared, and black plumes shook formidably. And all the time the *gitas* (inciters) hurled themselves in enormous bounds along the front and flanks of that solid mass of lusting warriors, urging them to greater effort and more terrifying passion.

Presently, through the uncanny refrain of the Blood Chant came the shrill voices of women, in perfect



*From a private photograph.*



harmony, inspiring the warriors onward. At last there broke through the front ranks of the phalanx a magnificent savage in a head-dress of blood-red *lorie* feathers, his anklets and bracelets of cow-tail plumes, a broad-bladed stabbing assagai in his hand. Two other similarly attired chiefs bounded to his side, and after a gigantic shudder of fearsome import, the whole mass swept forward in the final charge over the sunlit space towards that little group of scarlet and gold. For a few moments it looked as though those sweating warriors had really danced themselves into a killing frenzy, and that the solitary splash of scarlet would be blotted out beneath a mass of stabbing, maddened Zulus. A rotten kind of finish for H.R.H. But they had kept their heads. With the perfect discipline of a body of highly-trained troops presenting a military spectacle at Olympia, the murderous rush of that wall of plumed Zulus checked within a yard of us, as if against an invisible barrier.

It opened up in the centre, and the companies wheeled to left and right, disclosing the advancing ranks of the women ; tall, straight and deep-bosomed, shapely and splendidly built. The married ones wore the *izidwala*—a short and narrow fringe of black beads suspended from a thin cord below the waist—and the maidens wore a kirtle of a few inches of beads. Beyond that, their attire was nil. In front of us they halted, a thousand pieces of living bronze. Slowly their bodies began to shiver and oscillate in the first movements of the Dance of the Women, and they lifted their voices in a syncopated chant of semi-tones, beautifully cadenced and weirdly attractive. The

singing gathered fire and volume, and the dance grew wilder and more passionate. In the background the sable-plumed Death Dancers wheeled and leaped, humming a sonorous antiphonal. Now the music and movement began to have its effect upon the emotions of the watching impis. Forty thousand voices, deep and resonant, chanted in unison the battle motif, the earth of the valley trembled to the thud of their stamping feet, the air vibrating to the hollow thunder of knobkerries beating on shields.

This Dance of the Impis lasted for well over two hours. As the Prince remarked, it was the sight and experience of a lifetime.

But there was far more in this event than a unique spectacle and a supreme thrill. It was a significant tribute to the value of the Prince of Wales as an asset of the British Empire. He had seen dancing together two sections of the Zulu nation which had been at deadly enmity for twenty years. He had witnessed a reunion of the Zulu peoples that had astounded Native Africa and confounded all authorities. And this phenomenon was due entirely to his visit. Yet he was not even aware of this fact at the time. But the fact was there, and it remains. The feuding Zulu impis had been joined by a figure and a personality and an institution that has become a tradition amongst feudal races: an individual who personified a leadership that was beyond question to primitive imaginations. For years the administration had sought and striven to end the feud between the two Zulu branches. But the Zulus remained deaf to all reason, scornful of all pressure. No chief could unite them. They re-

fused to come together under any one of their own people, or to blend and sink their differences under any Government official. Yet, without argument and quite spontaneously, they had fused under the spell and prestige of a young man in a red coat, who was above all personal and political motives, and who was blood of a line of Kings. In the great march in from the distant kraals and villages of the clans to greet the Prince at Eshowe had this thing taken place. To the native races of Africa, the British Throne is a very potent influence.

After Eshowe, H.R.H. returned to Durban for three days' rest, minus all functions.

On the first of these days of rest H.R.H. played ten chukkas of polo, eighteen holes of golf, a couple of hours' squash, and did a few hours' office work. And after a quiet dinner, he danced until one o'clock in the morning. When it was time to leave this private dance he said, "It's too early to go home," and he reached down a glengarry cap that was hanging in his host's hall—a Durban business man with a broad Scots accent and no knowledge of the ways of Royalty—placed it on his head and danced a highland fling. If you should wish to meet a modern man of commerce who would take a mediæval delight in getting hung for a Royal Prince, I will give you the address of this canny Scots business-man. Multiply this act and effect, as the Prince is always doing, and I am not sure that you will not arrive at a conclusion as convincing as the end of the Zulu feud.

The next day was just as strenuous, and ended in H.R.H. attending an ordinary hotel dance as an



ordinary guest. The manager was warned to tell nobody that the Prince was coming, as H.R.H. wanted to be left severely alone, but the gentleman got a trifle rattled by the honour, and became so pleased with life that at dinner-time he toured the dining-tables and admitted a hundred or more people into the secret by asking them not to crowd round the Prince "if the latter should come to the dance." The consequence was that before dinner was finished half the people in Durban knew that the Prince intended visiting this hotel dance, and well before the dancing commenced a minor invasion occurred.

However, I must say that the manager's warning proved as unnecessary as it had seemed indiscreet. For amongst the whole of the dancers and all who were present, there seemed to be a spontaneous conspiracy of sympathetic consideration to provide H.R.H. with the unhindered freedom of an ordinary habitué. It was, in fact, possible to see the conflict of this spirit with natural curiosity about Prince. One could observe groups of people in the doorways, and at the tables under the verandahs, elaborately camouflaging their interest in the person of H.R.H. by an unconvincing concentration on the other dancers in his vicinity. The couples on the dance-floor were equally and as obviously careful to disguise their thrilled eagerness for a close inspection, by giving H.R.H. and his partners ample dancing space and by appearing unusually intent on their own partners.

Towards the middle of the evening this attitude developed, as it usually did at dances, into a frank and unqualified acceptance of the Prince as an ordinary

cheerful and human unit, whose pleasantly casual glance could be encountered without embarrassment or confusion, whose contiguity aroused an alluring sensation of camaraderie, and whose personality inspired a strangely sincere feeling of fealty and affection.

The consideration shown by the guests at this informal hotel dance was by no means a constant experience of the Prince on tour, or even when he attends social functions in England. But even where regard for his personal convenience is swamped by excessive enthusiasm, his effect is much the same. The reality of H.R.H. divests exuberance of some of its vigour—gives it a heart.



## CHAPTER XVII

### CONCLUSION

THE remainder of the Prince's tour of Africa was as full of work as the portion I have described. Amongst the settlers and the native populations of Rhodesia, the miners and magnates of the Rand, the vast industrial mixture of cosmopolitan Johannesburg, the agriculturists of Natal, the towns and settlements of the Transvaal, all normally engrossed with and obsessed by their local affairs, he spread the intimate touch of the mother country, and revived the traditions of the Empire as no other public man of our times could have done.

The detail of this I do not propose including herein, for this book is primarily a study of H.R.H., and not a record of any one of his tours. I believe I have already provided a sufficiently complete picture of the Prince of Wales on his job to fulfil the object of its inclusion in the form in which I wrote it on the spot during the tour. There is, however, one more story of this tour which must be included, for no picture of H.R.H. would be complete without it. It illustrates what I consider to be the most attractive asset in his composition. And that is his infinite sense of humour. Most of us consider we have a sense of humour. All successful men claim it. But it needs

a very great man to laugh at himself and invite others into the joke. The Prince is the only man I have ever met who can do this successfully. The incident occurred towards the end of the tour of the Union, at the close of a day that had been unusually full of ceremonial, speeches, pomp, and glory, with the Prince at his most Royal and official best. A real 'review order' day, with dignity in its best clothes. It had also been a particularly tiring day.

I had been dining with H.R.H. in his saloon. It was the usual small, informal dinner of the train—the Prince, three or four of his Staff, another soldier-man, and myself. All in ordinary lounge suits. A few minutes after the meal was finished—say, about ten o'clock—the train drew up at a 'halt.' The pilot train was there, for it was the spot selected for a 'lie-up' through the night, as the next day's programme commenced with a function a few miles farther along the line.

Suddenly the Prince rose and said :

"Come on, we'll go and have a sing-song on the 'cow train.'"

Two servants trundled the Prince's small travelling piano out on to the little platform and transferred it to the big saloon of the pilot train. The Prince hopped out, carrying his ukelele under one arm and a case of music under the other. Three of us followed him.

The whole of the 'press' and a score or so of officials were in the pilot train saloon, yarning and otherwise amusing themselves before 'turning in.' The Prince's arrival was unannounced and, of course, quite unexpected.

Everybody stood up immediately, but the Prince, grinning cheerfully, planted himself comfortably on a vacant seat just inside the saloon, near where the piano had been placed.

"Come on, somebody," he cried, "and make a noise on the piano." He unrolled his music and got his ukelele ready, at the same time firing off chatty conversation to the men sitting near, thus putting them completely at ease.

A piano-playing South African camera-man was produced. H.R.H. handed him some jazz music, and commenced to tune up his ukelele. In five minutes he had the whole crowd going at the top of its form. It was like a scene in the ante-room of an officers' mess after dinner on guest-night with the senior subaltern as O.C. ceremonies. Every eye was on the Prince, every face smiling, some with sheer delight, others with wonder. Excepting the three or four press representatives who had travelled out to Africa on the *Renown*, none had seen the Prince of Wales as an ordinary British subaltern off duty, gingering up a party. It was a new and amazing aspect of him. They had seen that he was 'human'; they knew he was human. Most of them had written endless columns describing the effects of his 'humanness' upon the people of South Africa. But they had not realised that his 'humanness' was as unqualified as this. In the course of the first few songs and choruses, H.R.H. concluded that the efforts of the 'band' would be assisted by a little more noise, so he added a couple of brass trays to his own musical equipment, beating upon them with his feet whilst he strummed

his ukelele and sang the words of the song. Later, apparently in search of a song in which every man was word and time perfect, he led off into 'John Brown's Body.' This cheery ballad was an immediate social and artistic success. Everybody sang it confidently, joyously, and hilariously from beginning to end.

Meanwhile, H.R.H. had become intrigued by a little jazz gadget which one of the correspondents had produced and was using with considerable musical effect. I think its name is 'gassoon.' It is a small aluminium instrument, about five inches long, into the mouth of which one hums the tune, with a result rather like the sound of humming through a paper-covered hair-comb. The correspondent removed the instrument from his mouth, wiped it on his sleeve, and gave it to the Prince to inspect. H.R.H. promptly placed it in his own mouth and commenced practising upon it.

At the conclusion of 'John Brown's Body' there occurred a lull—like the uncomfortable pause in a conversation at a dinner-party where the guests are not quite sure of their ground. The eyes of H.R.H. gleamed impishly: he raised the gassoon to his lips again, expanded his cheeks, and commenced to play another tune. Down that smoke-wreathed saloon ears were eagerly cocked to interpret the melody. It was a little indistinct at first, though familiar. In a few bars, however, as the Prince got the knack of the instrument, the refrain was suddenly recognised. It was one which had been sung to the Prince half a dozen times a day during the whole tour. It was 'God Bless the Prince of Wales.'

For a few seconds there was silence, except for the sound of the gassoon—a sort of taken-aback silence, as though the company did not quite know what was the correct thing to do in the circumstances. Then, as suddenly as the air had been recognised, the whole crowd joined in heartily, magnificently. For a few more bars H.R.H. kept his face as straight as his instrument would permit, and then exploded into laughter. Holding up both his hands he cried : “For Heaven’s sake, that’s enough : that’s enough of that.”

As ‘God Bless the Prince of Wales’ came to a premature end, and before the intentional humour of the incident had been completely realised, H.R.H. again raised the gassoon to his lips. And this time there emerged the strains of another song that had been sung to him on countless occasions, usually as a complement of the first : ‘For he’s a jolly good fellow.’

The Prince’s efforts to stop this were helpless. Nothing short of the derailment of the coach would have stopped it. I have never heard it sung with such intense sincerity and such feeling. Neither have I ever seen such affection and enthusiasm as shone in the eyes of that crowd of emotion-hardened, sophisticated pressmen.

There were no more awkward pauses afterwards. There was not one man in that saloon who would not have gone gladly to the devil for the Prince that night. It is certain that no newspaper correspondent attached to the Royal tour could ever have put into his dispatches the feelings H.R.H. aroused.



A Minister of the Nationalist Government—a Labour extremist—sitting next to me, placed his hand on my arm and said in reference to ‘God Bless the Prince of Wales’: “The next time I sing that, it will be in no spirit of formality.”

I heard several pressmen exclaim to each other, “My God! he’s marvellous.” Making due allowances for the emotion of the moment, I am inclined to think that the superlative is appropriate. I wonder if any other Prince, or any monarch, president, or premier, has been big enough, courageous enough, to get intimate touch with an audience by ‘pulling his own leg’ like this. Still more do I wonder if anyone but the Prince could do so with it without impairing his own dignity and influence.

Because of its varied communities, social, political, and ethnological differences, and the republican sentiments of half the white population, the South African Tour provided a perfect example of the Prince’s popularity and what is beneath it. It proved beyond reasonable doubt that universal interest in him is due more to his own personality than to his inherited position. It showed that the combination of this personality with the traditions he represents is a unique influence upon the sentiments of all with whom he comes into contact.

It may be argued that in deep-seated problems like that of South Africa’s racial rivalries, his influence could only be temporary. It is improbable that in any substantial sense the effect of his visit ended this perpetual feud. Even the indirect results can only be a matter of speculation. But the significant point is that whilst he was there racial animosities were

sunk for the first time in the history of the country. In drawing the factions together on to common ground, and binding them in a common welcome of himself, he did more than anyone else has ever done in South Africa. His complete aloofness from any suspicion of partisanship, his own selflessness, humanness, and simple friendliness, produced a curiously effective presentment of the reality of an Empire spirit and its traditions. It gave the parochial minds of both sides their first 'close-up' of the bigger picture. The Prince and the personality of the Prince stirred imagination beyond local limits. Undoubtedly H.R.H., by the mere act of being himself, spread in all kinds of places and amongst all kinds of people in Africa, a belief that there must be something in this Empire business after all. I heard these actual words used in an obscure dorp in the Transvaal.

However, the main point of all—as I have already mentioned—in this description of the Prince in South Africa, is to show him as he is to-day in his full stature ; to show the work he does when he is on his job, and the way he does it. It proves, I think, that universal interest in the Prince of Wales is justified, and that this universal interest is much deeper than it is popularly supposed. Reviewing all I know of H.R.H. and all I have seen of him, I must say that there is a bigness about him, a spaciousness, which places him in a class by himself. I am inclined to think that he is not only a very great gentleman, but that he is, possibly, the biggest thing we have got in our Empire at present.